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Government
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Policy Research
Initiative

Gouvernement
du Canada

Projet de recherche
sur les politiques

MARCH 2008

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 1

HORIZONS

P O L I C Y R E S E A R C H I N I T I A T I V E

CA1
PR 82
- H56

Hope or Heartbreak: Aboriginal Youth and Canada's Future

www.policyresearch.gc.ca

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT
NO. 40560504

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN
ADDRESSES TO:

Policy Research Initiative
56 Sparks Street, 1st Floor
Ottawa, ON K1P 5A9

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This special issue of *Horizons* was a joint collaboration between the Government of Canada's Policy Research Initiative and the Research and Analysis Directorate at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Sonny Assu

Laich-kwil-tach from the Wei Wai Kai (Cape Mudge) band

Sonny Assu is one of Canada's most promising emerging artists. He combines contemporary aesthetics with traditional Northwest Coast form-line and design. His paintings and sculptures experiment with notions of commodification and the ready-made, but are a critique of contemporary culture. "I am a product of pop culture. I grew up in the age of mass media advertising and subliminal adverts" he says [but] "I am able to combine my pop roots with my traditional Laich-kwil-tach heritage." The result is an encounter with tradition that refuses to acquiesce to the stereotypes of First Nations art and artists, while respecting Native culture and addressing an urban context. "I speak to the notion of conformity by not coforming to the commonly perceived Indian identity."



For the cover illustration, the artist used a traditional deer hide drum as "canvas" to create the tongue-in-cheek *iDrum: Hotel California*. "The drums have been a big part of my life. They were the first items I learned how to create traditionally." The painting illustrates the juxtaposition of polarized cultures. The *iDrum* series speaks about how we use icons and objects of pop-culture as totemic representation. The work disseminates the ideals behind personal totems and how pop-objects/icons influence our contemporary lineage.

When asked: *Why Hotel California?* Sonny's answer was simple. "It has Eagles on it."

< <http://sonnyassu.com> >

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Hope or Heartbreak

Aboriginal Youth and Canada's Future

Thomas Townsend
Executive Head
Policy Research Initiative

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Deputy Minister
Indian and Northern
Affairs Canada

Aboriginal youth under the age of 25 represent more than half of the Aboriginal population in Canada today.

The significance of this demographic reality takes on even more importance when contrasted with the current aging of the general Canadian population. The juxtaposition of a rapidly growing young Aboriginal population and an aging baby-boom cohort in the general population represents both a unique policy challenge and a unique opportunity for Canada.

In the years to come, all orders of government will be pressed to make necessary adjustments for providing the appropriate mix of services required to support an aging population, while simultaneously focusing on the development and renewal of a shrinking labour force. Investments in youth – Aboriginal youth in particular – will be critical to successfully address these challenges.

New generations of young Aboriginal people will have the opportunity to become active participants in shaping tomorrow's society. However, the current context requires higher levels of human capital for youth to navigate the pathways to adulthood, a transition that already comes with varying degrees of uncertainty and risk. While this is true for all youth, the poor socio-economic conditions in which many First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth live create substantial additional challenges.

This special issue of *Horizons* offers many insights into the emerging trends, opportunities and policy implications related to a rapidly growing Aboriginal youth population.

This volume, which represents the culmination of over a year of close cooperation between the Policy Research Initiative (PRI) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), was conceived under the auspices of the PRI interdepartmental research project, *Investing in Youth: Evidence from Policy, Practice and Research*. We have had the good fortune of being able to include a wide variety of Aboriginal policy research by some of the best researchers from both within and outside of government, and we hope the quality of this research work is evident.

The studies contained in this volume are timely, as are the opportunities they represent for focusing the attention of the policy research community on Aboriginal youth issues. At a time when much of current public attention regarding Canadian population trends is preoccupied with aging baby-boomers, dwindling rural communities and struggling new Canadians, the phenomenal growth of the Aboriginal population has flown under the radar.

But the numbers are clear. As Jeremy Hull's study shows, between 2001 and 2026 more than 600,000 Aboriginal youth will turn 15, including more than 100,000 in each of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. This growth represents a massive influx into the working-age population, particularly in Saskatchewan, where it is projected that by 2026, fully 36% of the population aged 15 to 29 will be Aboriginal.

We know that there have been considerable improvements in the socio-economic conditions of Aboriginal

peoples over the past two decades. As noted in the article by Guimond and Cooke, progress has been observed among the Registered Indian population with respect to their basic educational attainment, life expectancy, and standard of living. The Hull article adds that Aboriginal students are moving from high school to post-secondary education in greater numbers, while the papers by Norris, Coley and Tulloch suggest emerging evidence that Aboriginal youth are asserting themselves as future stewards of their communities and their cultures in the 21st century. These are all important developments, and should be celebrated.

Yet in spite of these improvements, there are still too many Aboriginal youth – and in particular Registered Indian and Inuit youth – who continue to lag behind other young Canadians in terms of post-secondary educational attainment, physical and mental health, and employment prospects. Clement's article, for example, shows how the gap between Registered Indians and other Canadians is widening, not closing, in terms of university completion. The article by Guimond and Robitaille finds unacceptably high rates of teen pregnancy. And as shown by Norris, many Aboriginal people are – even as we write these words – witnessing the extinction of their traditional Aboriginal languages.

Many of the difficulties observed here are rooted in a number of factors, notably the effects of intergenerational transmission of poverty, and geographical barriers to attending



post-secondary institutions that are often located far away from Aboriginal communities. However, the article by Chandler and Lalonde also reminds us that these phenomena cannot be viewed simply as "Aboriginal prob-

lems," for the very good reason that tremendous differences exist among Aboriginal communities in terms of social outcomes. These variances – among communities and identity groups – hold important lessons that policy researchers would be wise to heed.

We know that Inuit and other northern Aboriginal youth are watching as their communities undergo radical cultural, environmental and economic change, and we know that they want to do their part to ensure that their communities will continue to thrive in the 21st century. We know, too, that Métis youth wish to continue to assert their place in Canadian society in a context of improved recognition of Métis peoples' rights and heritage. Increasing numbers of Aboriginal youth will find themselves working and raising families in large cities, while striving to maintain or re-establish ties to their communities and traditional cultures. And we can say with some certainty that increasing numbers of First Nations youth will find themselves without Registered Indian status, with the inherent implications in terms of access to certain services.

Through the course of this project, we gained a new appreciation for the limitations placed on researchers by the lack of data and information. While we note that many factors (political feasibility, affordability, jurisdictional constraints) come into play in policy deliberations, it is essential to continue to build a strong

multi-disciplinary and policy-relevant foundation of knowledge on Aboriginal issues.

We would also be remiss were we not to acknowledge from the outset that this volume only scratches the surface.

There are many untapped lessons to be learned from successful initiatives by and for Aboriginal youth in communities across the country that are having a positive influence.

While we examined a vast array of topics, there are many others that we did not address. For example, we were unable to delve into the many important research and policy questions surrounding the use of Aboriginal child and youth welfare services; or the social and economic impacts and costs of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder on individuals, families, and their communities; or, the poverty-health nexus. We also know, as noted by Brant Castellano, that there are many untapped lessons to be learned from successful initiatives by and for Aboriginal youth in communities across

the country that are having a positive influence. Obviously, if we are going to develop appropriate policies and programs to deal with the issues that affect the well-being of Aboriginal youth, these knowledge gaps need to

be addressed through more expansive research efforts in the future.

Of course, while INAC is already taking a leadership role in addressing key gaps with respect to Aboriginal policy research, it is not working in isolation. There are also at least two dozen other federal departments and agencies, as well as academic think-tanks and Aboriginal organizations themselves that are engaged in the creation of knowledge regarding Aboriginal issues. Bridging and linking these diverse research activities on a horizontal basis is paramount, and

both INAC and the PRI are prepared to work together collaboratively towards that particular objective.

In short, we know that the journey facing Aboriginal youth in the years to come will have significant importance for the future of Canada, in terms of well-being, social cohesion and economic prosperity. And we fully embrace our responsibility as policy-makers to use the levers at our disposal to ensure that young Aboriginal people in Canada have the opportunities, skills, and tools they need to chart their own course. We must enable them to continue redefining and reaffirming Aboriginal peoples' place at the heart of the Canadian project. We recognize that to do otherwise might condemn another generation of Aboriginal youth to the margins of our society.

Finally, we also know that to achieve this objective, we in government need to do our homework. And yes, this means investing in high-quality, cutting-edge policy research. Aboriginal youth deserve nothing less.

Reflections on Identity and Empowerment Recurring Themes in the Discourse on and with Aboriginal Youth

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and

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Royal Commission of
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The invitation to contribute to this special issue of *Horizons* was framed in terms of providing an intergenerational perspective on issues affecting Aboriginal youth. I have taken the opportunity to reflect on 50 years of experience with children and youth as a social worker in family and children's services, as a mother, a grandmother, a participant in First Nations' community life, a university teacher, a research director with the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) and, most recently, as an adviser and writer on residential school healing and research ethics. My comments are not consistently situated in current research, but they do weave together learning from many sources.

My first published article was entitled "Vocation or Identity: The Dilemma of Indian Youth." That was in 1970. More than 30 years later, I was called on to review Ph.D. dissertations by Aboriginal students exploring the same theme, with the titles "Participation without Integration" (DeGagné, 2002) and "Aboriginal Identity in Urban Areas" (Restoule, 2004).

Youthful participants in these small qualitative studies provide insight into the experiences contributing to broader trends. Participants report that high school, in particular, is a major site of identity struggle, that they feel disconnected from the curriculum and the school environment, and uneasy about "leaving behind" peers and relatives if they achieve too much. Many report an urge to take control of their lives, even if it means taking to the road with a knapsack.

On a broader scale such feelings and consequent decisions are reflected in

statistics that indicate half of Registered Indians in the 20 to 24 age bracket have left school without a graduation diploma.¹ Relative to the Canadian youth population, male Aboriginal youth have disproportionately high rates of incarceration and suicide; Registered Indian girls in their teen years bear children at six times the rate of teenagers in the general population.² While these figures apply to the Registered Indian population, other measures of well-being indicate significant and persistent disparities between the Métis and Inuit and the Canadian population in general.

The young people in the qualitative studies mentioned above have embraced their Aboriginal identity. They have traversed or are traversing the risks of adolescence. A few come from emotionally and economically stable backgrounds, but most face the same challenges as their less educated and less articulate peers: fragmented families, absent fathers, low income, multiple changes of residence, personal experience with alcohol abuse, and dropping out of school periodically, beginning in their mid-teens. Their stories, and the stories of other Aboriginal youth I have encountered in my own journey, illuminate the core of resilience that resides within them and how it is nurtured. More than refining descriptors of disadvantage, our policy research and intervention strategies need to engage with that core.

The Tasks of Adolescence

The ground-breaking work of Michael Chandler and Christopher Lalonde³ on suicide among First Nations youth has done an additional service. It has reminded us that Aboriginal youth

are, after all, adolescents going through the same turbulent changes as other contemporary youth, asking and seeking answers to the questions: Who am I? Who do I want to be? What do I want to hold onto from the person that I was yesterday?

Becoming their own person means trying on different identities, making sense of the world in their own way, trying things their parents never even imagined. Still, youth don't write these life scripts and play them out in a social and emotional vacuum. They have learned things and how to do things from their parents. They look to their peers who have had similar formative influences. They acquire skills and credentials in school. And in privileged circumstances, if their experiments in living don't work out, they have the option of going home, gathering their resources and launching out again.

Many Aboriginal youth lack some or all of these supports. As work has moved away from the land and the family unit, young men no longer have the opportunity for a lengthy apprenticeship with older relations modelling economic skills and personal competencies. There is greater continuity in women's roles, but both male and female youth are encouraged to look to education to prepare them for adult responsibility. In addition to social change, which blurs the contours of adult identity, youth also have to deal with stereotypes, low expectations and incidents of outright racism in their encounters with non-Aboriginal society.

Development of a mature sense of self is further complicated by the increasing diversity within Aboriginal communities as represented in Figure 1. The blond First Nation child may deal with bullying in the

schoolyard, because he does not look sufficiently Indian to belong. The Métis youth in a family that only recently acknowledged its roots may be both relieved and anxious at having her personal history redefined. The urban Aboriginal youth who becomes an abstainer out of respect for ceremonial protocol will probably face ridicule from his former buddies.

Historic Trauma

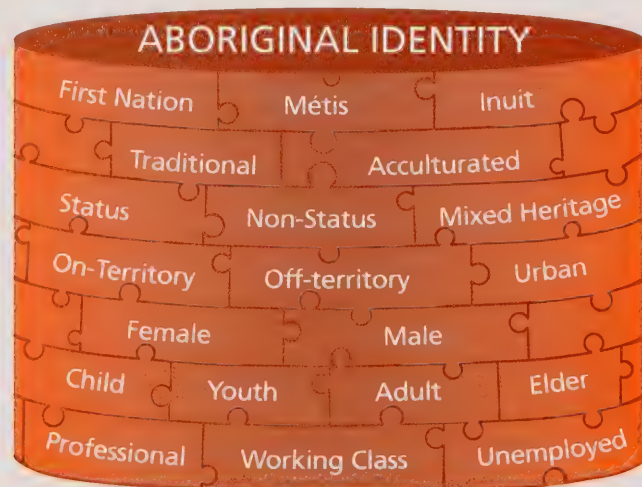
In addition to confronting discontinuities in their personal experience, Aboriginal youth also have to bridge the historic distance between their people and the dominant, surrounding society.

Dr. Clare Brant, the first psychiatrist of Aboriginal origin in Canada, had remarkable success in working with angry, alienated and self-destructive young men referred by the courts. He related that in his practice the first real communication from these young men was often something like: "You killed the buffalo. You stole our land. You can't help me!"⁴ Clare's response to that accusation shifted the dialogue to a different plane.

I wondered as I heard that story: How can truant teenagers in the wilds of London, Ontario grieve about the loss of lands that occurred generations before they were born? Research sponsored by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation highlighted the dynamics of historic trauma transmission over generations (Wesley-Esquimaux and Smolewski, 2004). The shocks of epidemics, displacement from lands, depleted food supply, suppression of ceremonies and languages, and the loss of children to residential schools

FIGURE 1

Complexities of Aboriginal Identity



and child welfare agencies reverberate through tight knit communities, provoking adaptive and maladaptive responses. These responses become embedded in the collective memory and are passed on in oral narratives, shaping perceptions and behaviour in successive generations. When the

of school attendance and achievement. That is a widespread misconception contradicted by research that consistently reports the desire of parents to see that their children have an education that will secure a better future. Parents who themselves have little formal education may have a

Entering a make-believe world may work as a learning strategy, but without the links that add meaning in everyday life, the learning and that part of the self that engages in it are in danger of becoming split off from the whole.

Children and youth who are told implicitly and explicitly that what they know from their upbringing is of no value come to distrust their own competence as well as the knowledge of those on whom they have depended. They may be driven to interrupt formal learning until they have worked through developmental tasks. Adult education programs available in a later phase have particular appeal and effectiveness precisely because they acknowledge and build on lived experience as a base for exploring new worlds.

Aboriginal educators Lorna Williams (2000) and Bill Mussell (2005) argue that the chasm between experiential learning and school experience does not have to be endured, with the failure and self-doubt that follow. *Mediated learning* proposes that research-based interventions can assist young people at any stage to acquire tools to make sense of complex environments just as they normally do through the mediation of parents who interpret meanings verbally, emotionally, and through their behaviour.

Statistical evidence indicates that a high proportion, perhaps 50 percent, of Aboriginal youth continue to drop out of high school before graduation, often engaging in high-risk behaviours. Many of those who leave school early, especially males,

When the shocks follow one another without intervals for recovery, pain and dysfunction are laid down layer upon layer and the original causes and effects become obscured.

shocks follow one another without intervals for recovery, pain and dysfunction are laid down layer upon layer and the original causes and effects become obscured.

Community initiatives to heal the legacy of residential school abuse demonstrate repeatedly that collective remembering is a first step to placing historic trauma in perspective and reorienting one's approach on the future (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2006). An Inuit student at Trent University, in a course on comparative international development, was deeply moved by learning about the history and social-economic disadvantage of indigenous peoples around the world. He told his instructor: "The young people in my village should hear this. They believe that the trouble in their lives is their fault" (Tookoom, 1989).

Mediated Learning

Youth are also prone to blame their parents for failing them. One criticism levelled at Aboriginal parents is that they do not reinforce the importance

limited repertoire of skills to pass on to their children to promote success in school. A young woman speaking to an RCAP public hearing recalled standing anxiously at the roadside waiting for the school bus on the first day of school, her hair braided, wearing red ribbons. Her mother reassured and admonished her: "You will be all right, Sherry Lynn. And remember – try to act like them."⁵

Successful Aboriginal students become proficient at playing the appropriate part in a world that is alien to them. A university student in DeGagné's research reported:

We studied major British writers, Shakespeare and Spencer and Chaucer and all that stuff and I thought it was pretty weird because...once I stepped into that room, once I saw the professor... I knew what he was going to talk about. I went into this medieval feeling inside of myself and the whole room seemed to change... and it was exciting to be in that sort of place.⁶

FIGURE 2

Anishnabe Path of Life



become underemployed, marginalized adults. Those who resume formal learning in their 20s attest to the critical need for making secondary education more affirming of Aboriginal identity development and making broadly accessible the avenues for engaging and re-engaging with learning when youth are ready to do so.

Avenues to Support Empowerment

A core principle of pedagogy in a number of First Nations traditions is that knowledge must be earned. That is, teaching received at one level must be practised, and responsible use of the knowledge must be demonstrated before the learner is ready to progress to the next level.

The RCAP Report cited empowerment as a central preoccupation of youth appearing before the Commission. Understood in context, empowerment is the progressive acquisition of knowledge and the ability to put it to use for the good of the community. "Agency," the power to make things happen, may be a better word to describe the process because it does

not imply turning over authority regardless of the recipient's readiness to use it effectively. In the past, traditional practices for socializing youth channelled their tendencies toward risk taking through hunting and raiding parties and age-grade societies which ceremonially marked transitions to maturity. In the present, as in the past, elders are the pre-eminent wisdom keepers while practical applications of cultural knowledge are learned by observing competent adults, in psychologist Erik Erikson's terms, people "who know things and know how to do things" (1968: 125).

Another teaching common to varied traditions directs attention to the path of life, which follows a course from east to west, marked by many turning points and diversions that lead to dead ends. Staying on the path leads ultimately to old age and wisdom before return to the spirit world. A symbol of the Anishnabe path of life is represented in Figure 2.

A substantial body of evidence already exists to guide policy that supports identity development and agency of Aboriginal youth. Review, analysis,

and case examples underpinning recommendations are available in the RCAP Report (1996), Senate Standing Committee reports on urban Aboriginal youth (2003) and mental health (2006), the Blueprint on Aboriginal Health prepared for the Kelowna First Ministers Meeting (2005), recommendations of the First Nations and Inuit Mental Wellness Advisory Committee (2006)⁷ and the Final Report of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (2006).

The 10th anniversary of the RCAP Report has passed. In the interim, studies year after year confirm RCAP's analysis of issues and reveal the partial and irregular progress being made in addressing social inequities and broadening opportunities for youth. In the RCAP Report, sports and recreation were seen as an important vehicle for promoting leadership qualities and an ethic of community service. Youth exchange programs between communities and between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth were recommended to break down isolation and communication barriers.

The RCAP Report argued that youth issues could not be treated in isolation from the larger challenges of education, justice, health, and economic development. The Report emphasized that involvement of youth in effecting change was essential and recommended that the diversity of cultures and social realities could best be accommodated by local authority to adapt program initiatives. The Report identified ongoing jurisdictional debates as a major impediment to sustained, co-ordinated responses to youth needs. A key recommendation was the development of a

Canada-wide policy framework that could guide the work of federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal agencies in their own spheres and provide a basis for periodic evaluation.

There have been positive developments in the past decade.⁸ Educational levels of the Aboriginal population have risen and more than 20,000 students enroll annually in post-secondary courses. Entrepreneurs in Aboriginal communities are making their mark, as are Aboriginal artists and writers. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation has demonstrated the possibilities of supporting community-led initiatives to heal residential school trauma in diverse communities across Canada, while maintaining fiscal accountability (DeGagné, 2006). Programs to encourage youth mentorship and attention to youth needs in cultural centres and urban environments have been launched.

Despite the good news, there are disturbing trends. Statistics reported by Guimond and Cooke in this issue of *Horizons* indicate that while standards of education, health, and income for Aboriginal youth have improved, the gap in the quality of life relative to Canadians as a whole remains wide. In terms of income, the gap is widening and Aboriginal men are falling behind Aboriginal women in educational attainment.

For a moment in 2005, leaders of federal, provincial and territorial governments, and national Aboriginal organizations came together at Kelowna to affirm a shared commitment to closing the gap in quality of life between Aboriginal citizens and

others in Canada, but the will to move ahead collaboratively appears to have dissipated. Single provinces, including Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Ontario, have taken initiatives to recognize the presence of Aboriginal people in curriculum and

have to be life-defining choices. Traditional teachings about the path of life emphasize that every diversion from the path offers learning for the next stage of the journey.

The features of policy required to reverse problematic trends and open doors for Aboriginal youth have become clearer in light of recent experience and research.

as students in provincial institutions, but parallel federal initiatives are necessary to alleviate concerns about offloading responsibility and eroding treaty rights. Aboriginal communities continue to labour under the administrative burden of fragmented, short-term programs with separate reporting obligations to multiple agencies.

The features of policy required to reverse problematic trends and open doors for Aboriginal youth have become more clear in light of recent experience and research:

- Parents continue to exercise key influence on youth choices. Enhancing the health, education, and economic status of parents will carry over to improve youth well-being.
- As they explore possibilities for their own future, youth learn from the models available in their environment. Competent adults in charge of community affairs expand the range of positive choices available.
- Dropping out of high school, becoming a teenage single mother or brushes with the law do not

- Youth reach turning points where they are ready to receive advice, especially from those who are close to their age but somewhat more experienced. At various times, mentors may be peers, teachers or Elders, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal persons.
- The diversity of personal circumstances and community environments require multiple avenues for engagement, capitalizing on the priorities and resources that exist in the local situation.
- Spaces to congregate with peers, take a break from having to meet external expectations, share experience and gather information are critical to the evolution of identity whether youth are university students, budding athletes, street youth, recovering addicts, or ex-offenders.

Deflecting Aboriginal youth from life-defeating choices requires sustained, diversified, and co-ordinated initiatives mobilizing federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal government support for local action.

Alternative Futures

The demographic pyramid that foreshadows explosive growth in the Aboriginal youth population is familiar to researchers and policy makers. Justice agencies have been the most vocal about the complementary reality that youth between 15 and 29 years of age are at the highest risk of making ill-fated choices and engaging in behaviour that is harmful to themselves and disruptive to those around them. When confrontations erupt at Caledonia or Deseronto or Oka, the images of defiant figures in camouflage dress provide a seductive answer to identity dilemmas of vulnerable youth. The prospective costs of doing nothing or doing little become vivid for a day or a week in the glare of media coverage.

I conclude with a final reflection that the majority of Aboriginal youth are not about to merge into the general population and disappear. They seek a place in society that affirms their value as citizens and as Aboriginal persons, and they are finding that embracing a personal vision of who they are and who they will become reconnects them with the wisdom of their Elders.

A student in the DeGagné study expressed the elation and hope that he experienced in finding direction in his life.

[F]or the first time in my entire life there is a purpose to my education. The purpose is spiritual. The purpose is intellectual.... I can see an answer and it's real because we're it. I am the answer. You, my friend are the answer.... What we're doing right here is the solution to what people put in quotation marks as "the Indian problem."⁹

That student was discovering the wisdom of tradition articulated by a Mohawk elder speaking to the Royal Commission:

In our language we call ourselves Ongwehonwe. Some people say it means real people.... It says that we are the ones that are living on the earth today, right at this time. We are the ones that are carrying the responsibility of our nations, of our spirituality, or our relationship to the Creator, on our shoulders. We have the mandate to carry that today, at this moment in time.¹⁰

The purpose of policy and policy research is surely to foster the conditions that will allow Aboriginal youth to find purpose and assume responsibility that are at the core of identity and empowerment. The policy challenge for the next decade is to dismantle the barriers that continue to block realization of those possibilities.

Notes

- 1 See the article by Guimond and Cooke in this issue of *Horizons*.
- 2 See the article by Guimond and Robitaille in this issue of *Horizons*.
- 3 See the article by Chandler and Lalonde in this issue of *Horizons*. See also Chandler and Ball (1990).
- 4 Personal communication. The late Dr. Brant was the author's brother.
- 5 Sherry Lawson as quoted in RCAP (1996: 164).
- 6 D'Arcy as quoted in DeGagné (2002: 84).
- 7 See RCAP, Volume 3, note 142, p. 332, citing the *Agenda for First Nations and Inuit Mental Health* (Health and Welfare Canada, 1991). A *Comprehensive Culturally Appropriate Mental Wellness Framework* prepared by the First Nations and Inuit Mental Wellness Advisory Committee (MWAC) (2001) was cited in the Final Report of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, *A Healing Journey, Volume 1*, Appendix Q, pp.405-407. A draft plan of MWAC (2006) was referenced in *Out of the Shadows At Last*, (Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, 2006) Section 13.1.2.
- 8 For examples, see Erasmus (2002).
- 9 Alexandre in DeGagné (2002: 95-96).
- 10 Testimony of Charlie Patton, Mohawk Trail Longhouse at RCAP public hearings May 6, 1993, in RCAP (1997).

Full references are available in the online version of this issue. It can be accessed by visiting the PRI web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>

Aboriginal Peoples A Young Population for Years to Come

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The Aboriginal population has experienced considerable growth over the past several decades and, compared to the Canadian population, has a very youthful age structure. With high fertility rates and moderate improvements in life expectancy, these trends are expected to continue well into the future.

The majority of Aboriginal children and youth live in two-parent families, but a high proportion also live in lone-parent families headed by females. Compounded with the geographic and cultural diversities among Aboriginal populations, the Aboriginal population demographic presents several opportunities and challenges for health, education and socio-

economic programs – especially those directed to Aboriginal youth.

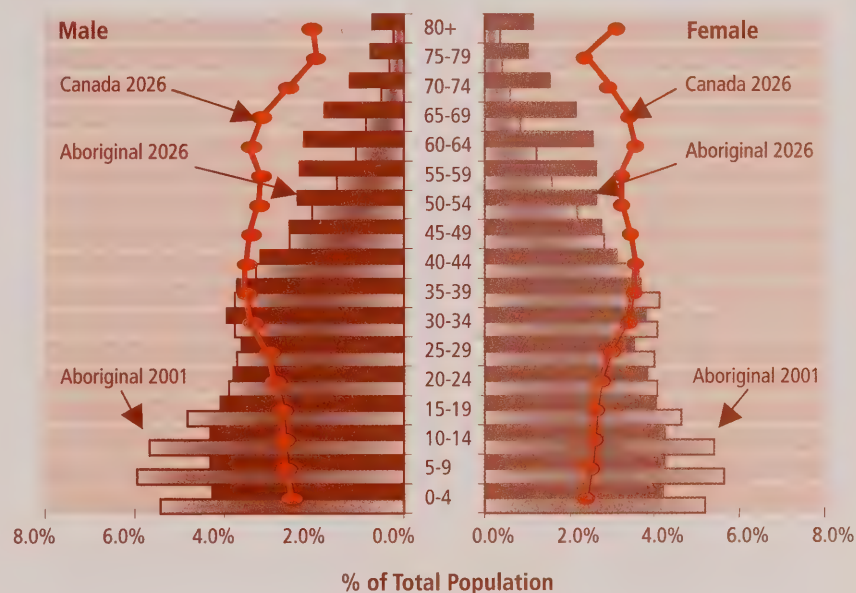
Beyond implications on Aboriginal-specific programs, Aboriginal youth also have the potential to make significant contributions to the country's labour force, as the non-aboriginal labour force diminishes due to the rapidly aging Canadian population. This will be particularly relevant in regions and urban areas with a large Aboriginal youth population.

Growing Rapidly and Young

According to the 2001 Census, about 976,300 individuals self-identified as Aboriginal. After adjustments for non-enumeration and survey undercoverage, it is further estimated that the

FIGURE 1

Age-Gender Pyramid for Aboriginal and Canadian Populations, Medium Growth Scenario, 2001 and 2026



Sources: (1) Aboriginal Population Household and Family Projections, 2001-2026, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation, 2007. (2) Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories 2005-2031, Statistics Canada, Catalogue 91-520-XIE.

Aboriginal Population Household and Family Projections, 2001–2026

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), in partnership with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), recently developed a series of Aboriginal population, household and family projections that span twenty-five years, from 2001–2026. The model is based on the cohort-component method and was developed to provide concurrent projections for four distinct Aboriginal populations: Métis, Inuit, Non-Status Indian and Registered Indian.

The projections are based on data from individuals who self-identified as an Aboriginal person and/or who identified as being registered under the *Indian Act* in the 2001 Census of Population. The 2001 Census estimated the Aboriginal population to be about 976,300. However, due to survey errors such as non-enumeration and survey under-coverage, this figure under-represents the actual population. To account for these survey errors, adjustments were made to the 2001 Census baseline data for the Aboriginal population. Further refinements were also required in order to assign individuals to the following four discrete Aboriginal populations:

- Registered Indians (regardless of Aboriginal identity)
- Non-Status Indian
- Métis
- Inuit

This process enabled the transfer of individuals who reported Métis, Inuit or North American Indian identity (as well as registration under the *Indian Act*) into the baseline count for the Registered Indian population. The resulting baseline counts for the individual Aboriginal population group are: 633,600 Registered Indians; 274,200 Métis; 110,300 Non-Status Indians; and 46,200 Inuit, for a total adjusted Aboriginal population of 1,064,300 in 2001.

The results reported in this article use the baseline data and projection results from the above-named projection series. It should be noted that as a consequence of these adjustments, the population base numbers used in this article differ from those published elsewhere.

To be consistent with recent trends for the Aboriginal population, the projections used in this article are based on assumptions developed under the “Medium Growth Scenario” that assumes:

- Moderate decline in fertility.
- Moderate decline in the volume of migration at a pace observed for the decade of the 1990s. (Results of analyses conducted from 1996 to 2001 noted a generally consistent trend of modest net in-flows to reserves; large net out-flows from rural areas; and small net out-flows from urban areas.)
- Gradual improvement in average life expectancy at birth, except for the Inuit (whose life expectancy is assumed to remain constant).
- Currently stable parenting patterns and distribution of transfer of Aboriginal identity to children. These projections include specific assumptions relating to fertility, parenting patterns and how these affect the identity of children. Children who come from families with one Aboriginal parent and one non-Aboriginal parent (exogamous parenting), or children who come from families with one parent from one Aboriginal group and the other parent from a different Aboriginal group (endogamous parenting), cannot be assumed to always have the same identity as one, both or for that matter, either of the parents.
- Declining rate of reinstatement of status under provisions in the *Indian Act* as amended in 1985 for Registered Indians.

Aboriginal population was 1,064,300 in 2001. Over the next two decades, the Aboriginal population is expected

to grow significantly, reaching about 1,566,900 individuals in 2026, an increase of 47% from 2001.

The Aboriginal population is growing (at 1.8 %) almost twice as fast as the Canadian population (1.0 %).

Assuming moderate declines in fertility, growth is expected to slow between 2001 and 2026, from 1.8% to 1.2%, but still remaining well above the projected growth for the Canadian population. Average annual growth rates for specific Aboriginal populations vary by group (See Table 4).

Common to a rapidly growing population is a youthful age structure. Figure 1 shows that, in 2001, about 51% of the Aboriginal population was under 25 years of age. The median age was 24.5 years, compared to 37.2 for Canadians. In contrast to the Canadian population, the Aboriginal population will continue to be youthful in the future, despite significant increases of the population at older ages. **By 2026, the median age of the Aboriginal population is projected to be 31.0 years, compared to 43.3 years for the Canadian population.**

Younger in the Prairies, the North and On Reserves

The Prairies and the North also have very high proportions of Aboriginal children and youth. Projections indicate that this growth will continue and that they will also have the youngest Aboriginal population in Canada for several years to come (Table 1). The youthfulness of the Aboriginal population in these regions can be explained in part by higher fertility levels.

While the population residing off-reserve (where two of three Aboriginal people live) is quite youthful at 25.5 years, **the Aboriginal population living on-reserve is younger still at 22.3 years.** Over the next two decades, Aboriginal population

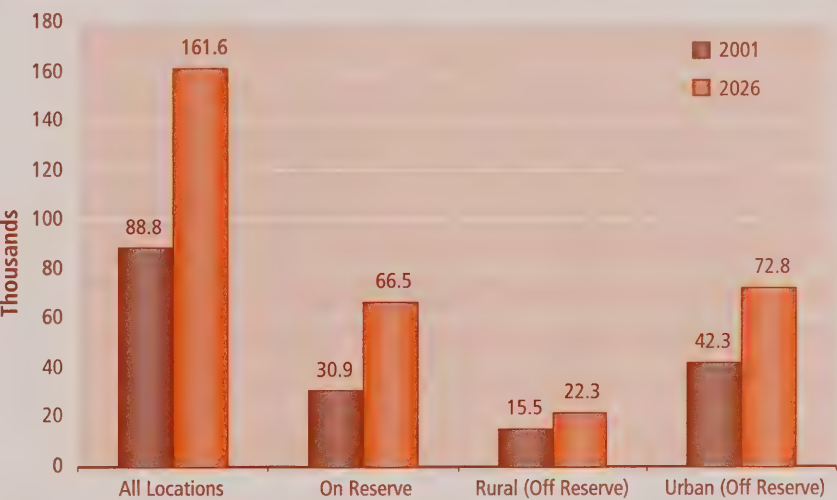
TABLE 1
Median Age for Aboriginals, Canada and Regions, 2001 and 2026

Region	Aboriginal Population*		Regional Population** (Total)	
	2001	2026	2001	2026
British Columbia	26.8	33.7	37.9	44.0
Alberta	23.2	30.7	34.7	41.2
Saskatchewan	20.4	27.8	36.4	42.8
Manitoba	22.9	28.9	36.4	40.8
Ontario	27.6	33.9	36.7	42.4
Quebec	26.3	31.7	38.5	45.0
Atlantic Region	25.4	31.9	38.3	47.3
North	22.7	28.3	29.4	32.7
Canada	24.5	31.0	37.2	43.3

*Aboriginal Population Household and Family Projections, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Medium Growth Scenario, 2007.

**Statistics Canada, Catalogue, 91-213-SCB and Catalogue no. 91-520-XIE.

FIGURE 2
Projected Aboriginal Lone Parent Families, 2001 and 2026, Medium Growth Scenario, by Location of Residence*



*Aboriginal Population, Household and Family Projections, 2001-2026, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2007.

TABLE 2

Median Age and Population less than 25 years of Age for Aboriginal Groups* and Canada**, 2001 and 2026

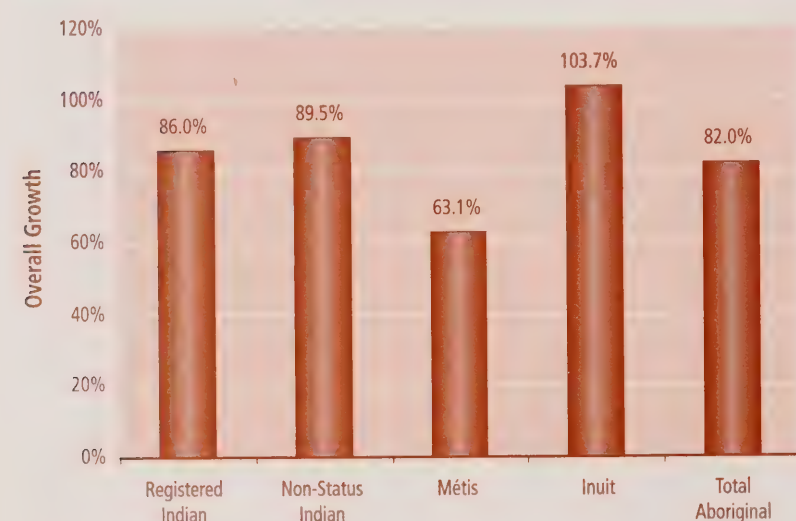
Year	Population	Median Age (in Years)	% Pop 0-14 yrs	% Pop 15-24 yrs
2001	Inuit	20.1	40%	19%
	Métis	26.8	29%	18%
	Registered Indian	24.0	35%	17%
	Non-Status Indian	23.8	35%	17%
	Canadian Population	37.2	19%	14%
2026	Inuit	25.3	32%	18%
	Métis	34.1	23%	14%
	Registered Indian	32.1	24%	15%
	Non-Status Indian	22.2	35%	20%
	Canadian Population	43.3	15%	11%

*Aboriginal Population Household and Family Projections, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Medium Growth Scenario, 2007.

**Statistics Canada, 91-213-SCB.

FIGURE 3

Overall Projected Growth of Aboriginal Lone Parent Families, 2001 and 2026, Medium Growth Scenario*



*Aboriginal Population, Household and Family Projections, 2001-2026, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2007.

growth is expected to occur rapidly on-reserve and in urban areas. Specifically, the on-reserve Aboriginal population is expected to increase by 69%, reaching 596,000 in 2026; the urban Aboriginal population is expected to increase by 42% to 724,100; and the rural population is projected to increase moderately by 22% to 246,800 by 2026.

More Households and Families in The Future

As the current population ages, larger numbers of young Aboriginal adults will reach the ages of household and family formation, resulting in a rapid growth in the number of Aboriginal households and families. Projections suggest that Aboriginal households could increase by 71% to 692,100 by 2026, while the number of Aboriginal families could increase significantly by 82%, reaching 615,100 families in 2026.

One important dimension of Aboriginal family demographics is the high proportion of single-parent families. One in four (26%) Aboriginal families is a single-parent family, compared to one in six for Canadian families (16%).¹ The vast majority (87%) of Aboriginal single-parent families are headed by a woman.

The number of Aboriginal single-parent families is projected to rise to 161,600 by 2026 (an 82% increase).

While the highest proportion of single-parent families is located in urban areas, growth in single-parent families is expected to be most pronounced on-reserve (Figure 2).

The Inuit – The Most Youthful Among Aboriginal Groups

- The Inuit population in Canada is the youngest of all Canadian Aboriginal populations and is growing rapidly. After adjustments for non-enumeration and survey-under-coverage, the Inuit population was about 46,200 in 2001, and by 2026 is expected to grow by 62%.
- In 2001, the Inuit population was 17 years younger than the Canadian population (Table 2).
- Compared to other Aboriginal populations, the Inuit have the youngest age structure, with the majority of Inuit children younger than 15 years.
- Nunavut had the highest concentration of Inuit population in the country. In 2001, 51% of the Inuit population lived in Nunavut, followed by Quebec at 21%, the Atlantic Region at 11%, and the Northwest Territories at 9%.²
- The majority of Inuit (74%) lived in rural areas while the remainder (26%) lived in urban areas.³ The regional distribution of the Inuit population is not expected to change significantly by the end of the first quarter of the 21st century. However, population projections do indicate that the proportion of Inuit living in Nunavut could increase to 54% by 2026.

A key component of Inuit population growth is high fertility. **In 2001, the Inuit fertility rate was estimated at 3.4 children per woman.** This figure compares with 1.5 children per woman for the Canadian population; 1.9 for non-status Indians; 2.1 for the

TABLE 3
Estimated Regional Distribution of Métis Children and Youth (Ages 0-24 years), Medium Growth Scenario, 2001 and 2026

Region	% Distribution 2001	% Distribution 2026
Canada	100%	100%
British Columbia	14%	12%
Alberta	24%	26%
Saskatchewan	17%	18%
Manitoba	20%	23%
Ontario	15%	12%
Quebec	4%	3%
Atlantic Region	4%	4%
North	1%	2%

Source: Aboriginal Population Household and Family Projections, 2001-2026, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2007.

Métis; and 2.8 for Registered Indians. While Inuit fertility is expected to decline in the future, it will likely remain well above the fertility level observed for the general population.

Improvements in life expectancy are usually another important component of Aboriginal population growth. However, for the Inuit population, a recent study reveals **no significant improvements in Inuit life expectancy over the 1991-2001 period** (Wilkins et al., 2008). Assuming this trend will continue, improvements in life expectancy are not expected to contribute significantly to Inuit population growth.⁴

The youthful age and continuing high fertility of the Inuit population will contribute to significant increases in the number of households and families.

- In 2001, the number of Inuit households is expected to increase by 93%, reaching 21,600 units by 2026.

- **By 2026, the number of Inuit families is expected to more than double**, from 11,500 to 24,100 families.
- Growth in single-parent families is expected to be significant among all Aboriginal groups, but to occur most rapidly among the Inuit population (See Figure 3). Between 2001 and 2026, the number of Inuit single-parent families is projected to more than double.

The Métis – Oldest Among Aboriginal Groups

The Métis population is the second-largest Aboriginal population in Canada, but has the oldest age structure.

- The adjusted Métis population count was 274,200 in 2001. Projections indicate that the Métis population could increase by 37% between 2001 and 2026, reaching 376,500 individuals.

Loss of Entitlement to Registration Status

In 1985, the *Indian Act* was amended to introduce provisions by which individuals could receive Indian Registration (widely known as Bill C-31). Bill C-31 allowed for the reinstatement of status to individuals who lost their status under certain conditions of the old *Indian Act*. Bill C-31 also included new inheritance rules applicable to children born to a Registered Indian on or after April 17, 1985. Under subsection 6(1) of the *Indian Act*, individuals are entitled to be registered if both parents are (or are entitled to be) registered. Under subsection 6(2), individuals are entitled to be registered if only one parent is registered (or entitled to be registered). After two successive generations of out-parenting (parenting of a Registered Individual with a Non-Registered individual), descendants are no longer entitled to registration.

Accordingly, due to the interplay of these inheritance rules and rates of out-parenting, there is a growing segment of descendants who will no longer be entitled to Indian Registration, resulting in significant long-term implications for the Registered Indian population. Long-term projection trends based on 1999 analysis suggest that "...sometime around the end of the fifth generation, no further children would be born with entitlement to Indian Registration" (Stewart Clatworthy 2001: *Re-assessing the Population Impacts of Bill C-31, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2004*).

- The Métis population, with a median age of 26.8 years, was ten years younger than the Canadian population in 2001.
- Two thirds of the Métis population currently live in urban areas. **The urban Métis population is expected to increase by 40% over the next twenty-five years, to 259,900 in 2026.**

Fertility and improvements in life expectancy are important components of Métis population growth. However, a significant portion of past population growth has also been attributed to changes in self-reporting of ethnic identity, over time and across generations – a phenomenon known as *ethnic mobility*.⁵

For the Métis population, **about 60% of the observed growth between 1986 and 2001 was due to changes in self-identification** (Guimond, 2007). However, further analysis and research are required before estimates on the scale and dynamics of ethnic mobility can be incorporated into the population projection model. As a consequence, until ethnic mobility and its impacts on population growth are better understood, mobility and its impacts will continue to be another dimension of uncertainty with respect to the future size of this Aboriginal population (Kerr et al., 2003).

As shown in Table 3, in 2001 the largest concentration of Métis

children and youth resided in the Prairies, with Alberta and Manitoba having the highest individual proportions. The majority of the Métis population will in all likelihood remain concentrated in the Prairies.

The youthful age structure and fertility of the Métis population will generate significant increases in household and family formation, especially in urban areas.

- In 2001, it is estimated that there were 119,800 Métis households, 68% of which were located in urban areas.
- The number of Métis households is expected to increase by 60% between 2001 and 2026.
- The number of Métis families is expected to reach 164,200 in 2026, an increase of 69% from 2001.

Registered Indians – Largest Among Aboriginal Groups

The Registered Indian population in Canada is the largest Aboriginal population.⁶

- After adjustments, the Registered Indian population count is expected to grow from about 633,600 to 920,100 by 2026 – an increase of 45%.
- In 2001, just over half (53%) of the Registered Indian population lived on-reserve, while 37% lived in urban areas, and the remaining 10% lived in rural areas.
- The on-reserve and urban populations are expected to increase by 64% and 33% respectively between 2001 and 2026. In contrast, the rural off-reserve population is expected to decrease by 10%.⁷
- In 2001, the Registered Indian population was young, with 52%

of its population less than 25 years of age. While there will be some aging of the population, the Registered Indian population will remain quite youthful, with 39% of the population aged less than 25 years by 2026.

Registered-Indian population growth is expected to **slow down** over the course of the next two decades. While this can be partially explained by declining fertility, it is also expected that there will be a loss of registration entitlement among a growing number of descendants of Registered Indians. (See Textbox: *Loss of Entitlement to Registration Status*.)

The youthful age structure and fertility of the Registered Indian population will continue to generate significant increases in the number of households and families, especially on-reserve.

- The number of Registered Indian households is expected to increase by 77%, to about 403,600 units in 2026.
- On reserve, the number of Registered Indian Households is projected to double between 2001 and 2026, reaching 191,600 units. In urban areas, the projected increase is 70%.
- The number of Registered Indian families is expected to increase 87%, to 361,300 in 2026.

Non-Status Indians – The Fastest-Growing Population Among Aboriginal Groups

The Non-Status Indian population is the fastest-growing Aboriginal population and could become the youngest by the end of the first quarter of 2026.

TABLE 4

Projected Average Annual Growth Rates for Aboriginal Population Groups* and Canada, Medium Growth Scenario, 2001-2026**

Year	Non-Status Indian	Registered Indian	Métis	Inuit	Canadian Population *
2001-2006	2.2%	1.9%	1.4%	2.1%	1.0%
2006-2011	2.5%	1.7%	1.4%	2.1%	0.8%
2011-2016	2.5%	1.5%	1.3%	2.0%	0.8%
2016-2021	2.3%	1.3%	1.2%	1.8%	0.7%
2021-2026	2.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.6%	0.7%

* Aboriginal Population Household and Family Projections, 2001-2026, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2007.

** Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 91-520-XIE.

- After adjustments for non-enumeration and survey-under-coverage, it is estimated that the Non-Status Indian population was 110,300 in 2001.
- Across Aboriginal groups, growth during the 2001-2026 period is expected to occur most rapidly among Non-Status Indians, reaching about 195,600 individuals, an overall increase of 77% from 2001.
- The Non-Status Indian population is currently growing at 2.2% annually. In contrast to other Aboriginal groups, average annual growth rates for the Non-Status Indian population are expected to increase up to 2.5% by 2016 (See Table 4).
- In 2001, the Non-Status Indian population was quite young, with **52% under 25 years of age**.
- Unlike other Aboriginal groups, children and youth are projected to form a growing share of the Non-Status Indian population: **by 2026, about 55% of the Non-Status Indian population will be less than 25 years old**. Accord-

ingly, the Non-Status Indian population could have the youngest age structure of all Aboriginal groups by 2026.

- In 2001, almost three quarters of the Non-Status Indian population lived in urban areas. By 2026, this population is expected to increase by 71%, to 137,100.
- While the Non-Status Indian population living on-reserve is relatively small, this population is expected to grow significantly, from 4,600 in 2001 to 18,600 in 2026.

Higher growth rates for the Non-Status Indian population are due in large part to the **expected increase in the number of descendants of Registered Indians who are not eligible for registration**. This process of loss of entitlement to registration status will affect not only the rate at which the Non-Status Indian population grows, but may also result in a future age structure that is very young.

Like other Aboriginal groups, another important component of Non-Status

Indian population growth is fertility. But while fertility and loss of entitlement to registration status can explain a great deal of the growth, as with the Métis population, a good portion of the future population growth could also be impacted by ethnic mobility. As with the Métis population, further analysis and research are required before estimates on the scale and dynamics of ethnic mobility can be incorporated into the population projection model. As a consequence, until ethnic mobility and its impacts on population growth are better understood, it will continue to be another dimension of uncertainty with respect to future population size of this Aboriginal population.

The youthful age structure of the Non-Status Indian population will continue to generate significant increases in the number of households and families.

- In 2026, the number of Non-Status Indian households is expected to have increased by 67%, to 75,400 units.
- The number of Non-Status Indian families is also expected to increase from 35,600 in 2001 to 65,500 in 2026.

Investing in Aboriginal Youth

As demonstrated, the Aboriginal population is growing rapidly and is very young compared to the Canadian population. Demographic projections suggest that these trends will continue well into the future, even though the population will be getting older.

Aboriginal population growth is particularly strong in the Prairie and Northern regions. Urban and on-reserve locations are also expected to experience high levels of Aboriginal population growth. In contrast, the Canadian population has a much older age structure and is entering into an era where a large segment of the population will be retiring from the labour force.

The youthfulness of the Aboriginal population will continue to have many implications for various socio-economic initiatives. With a particular focus on investments in education, there are opportunities for improving the overall well-being of Aboriginal people. It is well documented that education attainment promotes labour-force participation, reduces an individual's dependence on government transfers, and impacts social economic status as well as overall well-being.

A rapidly growing population also comes with its challenges. As Aboriginal youth grow older and start forming households and families, additional pressure can also be expected on existing resources, such as the demand for housing, which will be most prevalent on-reserve and in urban locations.

Notes

- 1 A "census family" refers to a married couple (with or without children of either or both spouses); a couple living common-law (with or without children of either or both partners); or a single-parent of any marital status, with at least one child living in the same dwelling.

A couple living common-law may be of the opposite or of the same sex.

- 2 The vast majority of the Inuit population resides in one of four Inuit land-claim regions: Nunavut; Nunavik Region in Quebec; Inuvialuit Region in the Northwest Territories; and Nunatsiavut Region in Labrador.
- 3 "Urban" – as defined by Statistics Canada – refers to an area with a minimum population concentration of 1,000 persons and a population density of at least 400 persons per square kilometre. "Rural" – as defined here – includes Inuit individuals living on reserves. (In Canada, only about 4.5% of Inuit live on reserves.)
- 4 Based on this study, the Medium Growth Scenario for the Inuit population projections assumes that life expectancy will remain constant throughout the projection period (from the Aboriginal Population, Household and Family Projections, 2001-2026, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2007).
- 5 In the literature, "ethnic mobility" is referred to as intra-generational ethnic mobility resulting from a change in an individual's affiliation over time (i.e., between censuses).
- 6 The total adjusted Aboriginal population in 2001 was 1,064,300, where approximately 60% were Registered Indian, 26% Métis, 10% Non-Status Indian, and 4% Inuit.
- 7 This is mainly due to the assumption that rural areas will continue to lose some of their Registered Indian population through migration from rural areas to reserve and urban areas. Stewart Clatworthy and Mary-Jane Norris. 2007. *Aboriginal Mobility and Migration: Trends, Recent Patterns, and Implication: 1971-2001, Aboriginal Policy Research, Moving Forward; Making a Difference. Volume IV, Chapter 13.* Thompson Educational Publishing, INC.: Toronto.

Full references are available in the online version of this issue. It can be accessed by visiting the PRI web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>

How Can One Be a Young Aboriginal?

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The question asked in the title of this paper is not so much a reference to Montesquieu's famous question (How can one be Persian?) as it is a nod to its reformulation by Quebec author, Jean-Paul Desbiens, following the events of the Oka crisis (Desbiens, 1993). Although "youth" is a favoured social category in research, to the point where young people are a traditional focus in anthropology, sociology and more broadly social sciences (Bucholtz, 2002; Galland, 2001), they continue to be neglected in Aboriginal studies in Quebec. And yet taking the pulse of youth has become essential in any study of the social, political and cultural issues and challenges facing First Nations.

Behind the figures and the demographic vitality which contrasts with non-Aboriginal society, what does it mean to be young and Aboriginal today? In this article,¹ I will attempt to provide the groundwork for reflection toward a better understanding of who these young people are, what sets them apart from their young non-Aboriginal neighbours, how they organize themselves to cast their voice and, finally, how public policies can take their realities and their aspirations into consideration.

Who are Young Aboriginals?

A Recent Political Category

For us, observers, policy-makers and stakeholders, the concept of youth refers first and foremost to a social and administrative category. Maxime Vollant, who was still a coordinator with the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Youth Council (FNQLYC) in 2005, recalled, for example, that for his Council the category "youth"

was intended for individuals between 18 and 30 years of age, whereas the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission classifies "youth" as the 18-35 year old age group. For its part, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has set the parameters at 15-24 years old. In Aboriginal settings in Canada, this category was introduced just 30 or so years ago.

Compulsory education in Indian residential schools, which cast aside traditional rites of passage (marking different passages from childhood to adulthood), is just one of the factors that contributed to the generation gap in Aboriginal societies. *Youth*, *Elders* or the *residential school generation* are recent categories that took on a growing importance from the 1970s, in a context of self-assertion, political and territorial claims, and cultural reappropriation. But what does this category mean at the community level? To understand the scope of such a concept from a grassroots perspective, I took three dimensions of identity-building processes that distinguish Aboriginal youth from their non-Aboriginal neighbours: intergenerational relations, familial relations and relations with mainstream society. I do not have the space to discuss here the challenges relating to education and adapted curricula, as that would be subject enough for a separate article in itself.² Nonetheless, they represent another essential dimension that reflects the specificity of the challenges faced by Aboriginal youth.

Intergenerational Relations

One of the first challenges for young Aboriginals is to formulate their role

and construct their experience as a continuation of and in close relationship with previous generations which each have their own responsibilities in the contemporary context. The Elders, men and women who knew the nomadic way of life, have become icons in the processes of supporting and promoting culture and traditions. They are considered the caretakers of local knowledge and are regularly consulted as guides. Despite the extreme

Family Ties

The importance of family undoubtedly represents another essential factor in the anchorings of identity among young people. The intellectual Vine Deloria Jr. stressed the importance of family as the first anchoring of identity: [TRANSLATION] "People in America do not, in practice, have a personal identity in the sense that Indians can feel it. When you meet an Indian, most of the time,

[TRANSLATION] "My grandfather told me that when he was 15 he was able to fend for himself, he didn't need anyone to take care of him anymore, he was even able to look after others. At age 15, we are only starting out in life. Then, I think about the generation that came after him, those who were taken away from their families, they experienced a trauma that we're still trying to heal and sometimes even forget. But them at least, they were given a sense of responsibility early on in life. Because some of them, by the time they reached 20-23, that's when I'd say band councils started to emerge as the representative and administrative authorities in communities, that started to develop, they were given this sense of responsibility right away. In part, it's the generation that went before them that gave them this sense of responsibility, since the world was changing very quickly and we were living in communities. [...]" (P.M., 28 years old, Atikamekw from Manawan, 2005 CIÉRA colloquium).

loosening of relations between children and their grandparents (where the adoption of a sedentary way of life upset the transmission of knowledge through experience and observation), Elders are at the heart of the identity representations of young people. Young people must position themselves in the eye of Elders, but also in the eye of another generation – the residential school generation – which early on assumed its political responsibilities. As the principal actors of political change in the 1970s, many members of this generation still occupy key positions in the social, cultural, and political arenas today.

the question is 'Where are you from?' followed by 'Who is your family?' In American society, you are asked where you are from and what you do." (Deloria, 1997: 218 [TRANSLATION]). To be young, then, is first and foremost to take one's place in a relationship of kinship and ancestry that extends into other spheres of society. For example, responsibility for (and not ownership of) ancestral lands now the subject of land claims is governed by family dynamics of management, occupation, utilization, and transmission. The family dimension prevails in the introduction of oneself, and there is no shortage of terms: for the

Atikamekw, for example, one is *nosim* (grandson), *nosimicic* (great-grandson), *octesinan* (older brother), or *nimis* (sister), before being "young." Among the Inuit, one is first and foremost *imgutaq* (grandchild), *imgutaliqqiuti* (great-grandchild) or *ani* (brother).

Relational Model and Genealogical Model

Are there unique Aboriginal characteristics with regard to relations between generations, with family, with grandparents and with ancestors? Not that we, white non-Aboriginals, neglect our grandparents and our Elders. But we are a long way from making their disappearance a cultural, social and identity issue. Senior citizens are not at the centre of young Quebecers' preoccupations in debates about social and cultural continuity, collective survival, identity affirmation or political claims. For the anthropologist Tim Ingold, the relationship between generations in many Aboriginal societies (especially traditionally nomadic ones) follows a *relational model* as opposed to a *genealogical model* characteristic of our western societies (Ingold, 2000: 136). Ingold explains that in western societies, the relation to ancestors, Elders, previous generations or, in a nutshell, the past, follows a fixed and linear continuity. Generations follow one another along the line of time. Each new generation replaces and sets itself apart from the previous one by an experience, a context and events that make it unique to the point of creating a "generation gap" (see Manheim 1990 or Attias-Donfut 1988). The western genealogical model, characteristic of modernity, supposes that "the present exists for us only thanks to the inexorable

abolition of the past from which it proceeds" (Descola, 1996: 226, in Ingold, 2000: 136); whereas in the genealogical model, life is contained in the concept of generation (each generation leads a life that characterizes it with its own identity referents), in the relational model, the concept of generation is integrated into the process of life. The ties between generations, between past and present, form a continuous cycle, a perpetual rebirth. It confirms the importance given to the dynamics of knowledge transmission and to intergenerational and familial relations among the First Nations. It also confirms awkwardness, largely widespread, where "young people" are spoken of without consideration of their relations with other generations, family, the community, the town or city, the forest, in short, with the complexity of their life settings.

Relationship with Non-Aboriginal Society

In addition to building its own social and personal experience in a constant relationship with two other generations, with family, with the community or with the Nation, First Nations youth must also position themselves in relation to non-Aboriginal society. In Canada, it has become commonplace today to speak of the realities faced by First Nations youth in terms of cultural disruption, identity crisis or confusion in a changing world. Suicide, drugs, alcoholism, social despair, and violence are realities, whether in communities or in an urban setting, which nourish social representations, guide scientific analyses and justify research initiatives. In public discourse, young

people would all be passively suffering from the present context of social transition; they would be contemporary victims of a heritage forged by attempts at assimilation and denial of rights and identities. They would be lost between two points of reference, that of their Elders and that of the dominant society, a place of advanced modernity. Regularly targeted by the media, these realities

of paradigm into account: they no longer speak of walks against suicide, but walks and initiatives for life, the term wellness is preferred to healing, well-being to despair, healing to therapy. Prevention and promotion of life are giving way to suppressive, moralizing and indoctrination policies. Under the impetus of countless resource persons, and particularly those of the residential

A complex landscape of social representations, judgments and positionings is therefore the backdrop against which is built the identity experience of First Nations youth.

have become inseparable from the "youth culture" in contemporary Aboriginal settings. Talking about Aboriginal youth means talking about suicide, poverty, unemployment, school dropout and poor education outcomes. Very early on, then, First Nations youth must learn to shape their identity in the eye of non-Aboriginal society and persistent social representations.

What are Young People Doing? Spaces for Expression and Affirmation

Continuing to speak of the realities of youth in terms of *problems* and *despair*, to vaunt initiatives *against* suicide and to develop *therapy* programs only serves as a reminder of the ills that must be fought, not the initiatives that must be supported. What is needed is for young people to be seen as catalysts of change for their societies. Numerous Aboriginal communities, institutions and structures have taken this change

school generation, many young people are burying an image that continues to be rooted firmly in local and national social representations: that of destruction as a means of expression. By joining band councils, creating their own institutions (youth councils), becoming involved in national associations (see, for example, Labrador Inuit Youth (*LIY*),³ Saputiit Youth Association of Nunavik⁴ or the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Youth Council, which will be discussed below), Aboriginal youth are claiming increased responsibilities and promoting initiative as a new model of social recognition. Internationally, the representation of youth is getting organized: "Indigenous youth were a vital part of deliberations on all matters in the Forum [...] and the indigenous youth representatives called for the establishment of indigenous units within all United Nations agencies."⁵ (Heather Minton-Lightning, the representative for

indigenous youth at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues). Through the development of music, literature and the arts in general, youth are responding to change by a variety of aspirations and influences that are shaped in a complex process of appropriation of signs, symbols and discourse making various spaces for exchange accessible: forest and territory, community and urban setting, pan-Amerindian gatherings, new technologies.... These spaces for expression and affirmation cannot be dissociated from each other since they represent places of contemporary experience for youth, places where they commit themselves with more or less conviction, with more or less success, and with more or less disillusionment.

Conclusion

So then, before being a young Aboriginal, one is first and foremost Abenaki, a native of Wôlinak, a member of a family and the daughter of one's parents. Depending on the audience, one is first and foremost the sister of one's brother before being from Betsiamites; when with a young person from another family from Betsiamites, one is first and foremost from Wemotaci before being Atikamekw; when with a young Atikamekw from Manawan, one is first and foremost an Algonquin before being an Indian; when with a Mohawk, one is first and foremost an Indian, or in more politically correct terms, a member of a First Nation, before being an Aboriginal when with

a white person. The term "young Aboriginal" is a useful shortcut for understanding, from a policy perspective, the realities and challenges facing new First Nation generations; it is also useful for developing intervention tools from a social perspective. But one must be cautious of taking such a category out of its context, of wanting to transpose it to a universe that has nothing in common. To do so is to risk confirming the old intuition of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1980) for whom youth is no more than a word. Although the Secrétariat à la jeunesse du Québec does not have a specific policy on First Nations youth, the debates and actions were laid out in the first 2002-2005 youth action plan, common to all youth in the province. In August 2005, the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Youth Council presented to the Government of Quebec a report in which it identified a series of recommendations expressing the specificities of Aboriginal realities and the priorities that needed to be addressed in public policies on young Aboriginals:

1. promote bringing young people and Elders together;
2. improve services intended for First Nations youth;
3. promote educational success and entry into the workforce;
4. improve health; and
5. increase their presence in society, both in the world and in their life settings, through more numerous exchanges with the non-Aboriginal population.⁶

In 2000, the Parti Québécois government supported the organization of the Quebec Youth Summit to which representatives of First Nations youth were invited. The realities and challenges debated at the Summit, which were a world apart from their preoccupations, led the First Nations representatives, in the view of Maxime Vollant,⁷ to organize their own circle for consultation, which resulted in the preparation of an initial report entitled "*Le nouveau cercle. Rassemblement des jeunes des Premières nations du Québec et du Labrador,*" (2001).

To be a young First Nations person refers to identity-driven characteristics: a deep and sustainable attachment to the community or Nation to which the young person belongs, defining a collective identity, and inclusive of young people living in an urban setting who have left for the city to pursue a university education or seek employment; the family and intergenerational ties that prevail in the expression of the young person's personal identity; a positioning that must take place, paradoxically, subject to judgments by the non-Aboriginal society, and with it. A complex landscape of social representations, judgments and positionings is therefore the backdrop against which is built the identity experience of First Nations youth, who are, at the end of the day, many other things before being young and Aboriginal and who do many things other than unanimously choose destruction as their only refuge.

Notes

- 1 This article is inspired by publications, workshops, symposiums and research aimed at better identifying the realities and challenges facing young Aboriginals (See Jérôme 2005a and b).
- 2 <<http://www.avenir-future.com/>>
- 3 <<http://www.nunatsiavut.com/en/youth.php>>
- 4 <<http://www.saputiit.ca/index.htm>>
- 5 Comments taken from the web site of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, <<http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane.nsf/0/1ED6734E6490E4E7C1256D250027C28B?opendocument>>.
- 6 Available at the following address: <<http://www.jeunes.gouv.qc.ca/strategie/consultation/liste-des-memoires.htm>> mémoire 72.
- 7 Maxime Vollant explained the motivation for this gathering at his conference entitled "Les jeunes des Premières nations du Québec et leur culture traditionnelle," presented on March 28, 2003, at the GÉTIC-CIÉRA colloquium at Laval University.

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Reports and Publications of Interest

Aboriginal Policy Research Vol. 1-5: Proceedings from the 2002 and 2006 Aboriginal Policy Research Conferences.

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ra/abus/ctu_e.html>

Aboriginal Well-being: Canada's Continuing Challenge.

Edited by Jerry P. White, Dan Beavon, and Nicholas Spence. Thompson Educational Publishing, 2007.

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ra/abus/ctu_e.html>

Redefining How Success is measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning

Report on Aboriginal learning, Canadian Council on Learning, November 2007.

<<http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Newsroom/Releases/RedefiningSuccessInAboriginalLearning.htm>>

The Potential Contribution of Aboriginal Canadians to Labour Force, Employment, Productivity and Output Growth in Canada, 2001-2017.

Centre for the Study of Living Standards, November 2007.

<<http://www.csls.ca/reports/csls2007-04.pdf>>

Report of the Investigation into Child and Youth Protection Services in Ungava Bay and Hudson's Bay.

Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse, April 2007.

<http://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/en/publications/docs/rapport_Nunavik_anglais.pdf>

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Children and Youth: Time to Act.

National Council of Welfare Reports. Volume 127.

National Council of Welfare, Fall 2007.

<<http://www.ncwcnbes.net/en/research/TimeToAct-AgissonsMaintenant.html>>

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Committee on Education, Government of Quebec, February 2007.

<<http://www.assnat.qc.ca/eng/37legislature2/commissions/CE/rapport-autochtones-en.pdf>>

Where are the Children?

Online resource about the residential school system in Canada.

Legacy of Hope Foundation, November 2007.

<<http://www.wherearethekids.ca>>

The Current Well-Being of Registered Indian Youth Concerns for the Future?

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One of the fundamental roles of policy research is to measure past change in order to inform current and future policy approaches. This requires measurement tools that are reasonably reliable, and that can be used to develop a picture of the recent past, while providing a glimpse into the future. To that end, the Research and Analysis Directorate of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has developed a series of population and community-level indicators based on the United Nations' Human Development Index (Cooke et al., 2004). The goal was to produce a set of reliable measures of broad aspects of physical and material well-being of Aboriginal peoples, which can be used to track progress over time and inform policy and program development by federal, provincial, and Aboriginal governments and institutions.

Trends identified to date by the Registered Indian Human Development Index (HDI) and the First Nations Community Well-Being Index (CWB) are encouraging, but at the same time invite further questions. Indeed, the overall well-being of First Nations improved considerably between 1981 and 2001, and the gaps relative to other Canadians on life expectancy and basic functional literacy closed significantly. However, these results also show that substantial well-being gaps continue to exist and, unless profound changes occur, it will be decades, if not generations, before equity between First Nations and other Canadians is reached (O'Sullivan, 2006). As well, within

the First Nations population, better health and education (Hull, 2005) outcomes for women have resulted in unusually wide gender gaps (Cooke et al., 2006).

One of the important questions suggested by this research is how conditions for young people have changed in recent decades. Positive social and economic transitions by youth and young adults, including completion of school and beginning of employment careers, and the establishment of relationships and households, are critical for lifetime stocks of human, social, and economic capital. At the same time, these are ages of higher health and social risk. Experiences in late adolescence have been shown to contribute significantly to the overall difference between Native Americans and others in mental and physical health and social outcomes (Harris et al., 2006). Furthermore, the experiences and characteristics of young people provide a window into the future. Examination of the conditions of youth cohorts, and how the experiences of young people have changed, gives us insight into whether the improvements seen in recent decades for the whole population are likely to continue.

In order to understand the changing conditions of young people, we have extended the Registered Indian HDI methodology to create an age-specific index of well-being, and used it to compare cohorts of Registered Indians and other Canadians aged 15-29 in the 1981-2001 census years. This age-specific HDI will again capture the following three important dimensions

of well-being: 1) a long and healthy life, 2) knowledge, and 3) a decent standard of living.¹

Registered Indian Youth HDI

The overall improvement in the well-being of the total Registered Indian population is reflected in similar improvement among Registered Indian youth. Table 1 shows the overall Youth HDI scores, which are an average of the composite mortality, educational attainment and income index scores. Scores for all three age groups rose between 1981 and 2001, closing the gap between Registered Indian and other Canadian youth.

The HDI is useful as a measure of the overall well-being. However, these overall scores can obscure important patterns in the individual dimensions of well-being, i.e., health, knowledge and standard of living. In the case of Registered Indian youth, examining these dimensions reveals a less optimistic picture of the improvement in the conditions of Registered Indian youth, relative to other Canadians.

Health

Life expectancy at birth among Registered Indians has improved considerably since 1981, closing the gap with other Canadians. This health indicator takes into account the age-pattern of mortality for a specific reference period, and use it to “predict” the expected life for someone born during that period. However, this health indicator has little use for monitoring changes in the health conditions of youth since it obscures the age pattern of mortality.

TABLE 1
Human Development Index (HDI), Registered Indians and Other Canadian Youth (15-29), 1981 and 2001²

	1981	2001
Age 15-19		
Registered Indians	.611	.713
Other Canadians	.838	.905
HDI Gap	.227	.192
Age 20-24		
Registered Indians	.612	.712
Other Canadians	.827	.901
HDI Gap	.215	.189
Age 25-29		
Registered Indians	.623	.737
Other Canadians	.846	.919
HDI Gap	.223	.182

TABLE 2
Mortality Rate from Age 15 to Age 30 (per thousand), Registered Indians³ and Other Canadian Youth,⁴ 1981 and 2001

	1981	2001
Male		
Registered Indians	75.7	38.5
Other Canadians	19.8	10.6
Gap	55.9	27.9
Female		
Registered Indians	34.2	20.6
Other Canadians	6.7	4.4
Gap	27.5	16.2

Table 2 shows the changing mortality rates for Registered Indians and other Canadians aged 15 to 30. Mortality among Registered Indian male and female youth has decreased substantially over the 1981-2001 period. Despite these gains, the gap between Registered Indian and other Canadian

youth remains wide. Current mortality rates for Registered Indian youth are comparable to the rates observed in Canada during the early 1940s (Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1947).

TABLE 3

Educational Attainment, Registered Indians and Other Canadian Youth (15-29), 1981 and 2001⁵

	1981	2001
Grade 9 or higher		
Age 15-29		
Registered Indians	75.3	90.3
Other Canadians	94.7	97.7
Gap	19.4	7.4
High School Certificate or higher		
Age 20-24		
Registered Indians	34.5	50.5
Other Canadians	69.5	84.4
Gap	35.0	33.9
High School Certificate or higher		
Age 25-29		
Registered Indians	42.8	60.6
Other Canadians	72.5	85.9
Gap	29.7	25.3

Knowledge

The continuing overall gap in formal education between Registered Indians and other Canadians is due in large part to the very low educational attainment of those now in adult and older adult ages (i.e., population aged 30 and over). As formal education is mainly acquired during the teenage and early adult years (i.e., before age 30), examining the educational attainment of young people gives us a better idea of current education trends.

Progress in functional literacy, as measured by the proportion with a grade 9 education (Table 3), has been remarkable for Registered Indian youth between 1981 and 2001. Despite this substantial progress in basic reading and writing skills, the "high school education gap" relative

to other Canadian youth shows little improvement. In addition, the widening difference between Registered Indians aged 20-24 and those 25-29 highlights the increasing importance of later educational attainment among Registered Indians.

Compared to various ethnic groups in Canada, Registered Indian youth rank amongst the lowest in terms of educational attainment in 2001 (Table 4). Although the increase in the absolute level of education is a positive outcome, the continued low achievement of Registered Indians relative to other Canadians is a concern. In the context of a highly competitive labour market, the lower and later educational attainment of Registered Indian youth suggests that, as these cohorts age, they will continue to

lag behind other Canadians in employment and income, and be at greater risk of low income and dependency.

Standard of Living

Whereas the Registered Indian HDI uses the average per capita income as a measure of material standard of living, for those in young age groups, we use average total household income as a measure of the economic resources available to youth.

As shown in Table 5, the average household income where Registered Indian youth reside increased between 1980 and 2000, providing evidence that the material standard of living for young people improved. However, these increases did not keep pace with those seen in other Canadian households. As a result, the gap between Registered Indian and other Canadian youth in the material conditions of living widened. These differences are further compounded by the fact that First Nations households are larger than other Canadian households, on average. Similar trends are observed for both youth living in reserve communities, and those living off-reserve, each accounting for about half of the young Registered Indian population.

Gender Differences

One of the findings of the Registered Indian HDI research has been that gender differences have been widening, particularly on the knowledge dimension of well-being. Registered Indian women have had increasingly higher educational attainment than Registered Indian men, although they have not caught up with men in

TABLE 4
Proportion of Young Adults (20-29) with High School or Higher Education, Selected Ethnic and Aboriginal Groups, 2001⁶

Jewish	95.0%
Chinese	92.2%
Filipino	92.1%
Balkan	92.0%
Greek	91.5%
Lebanese	89.9%
Italian	89.8%
Polish	88.6%
Dutch	88.0%
Spanish	87.8%
Hungarian	86.4%
Ukrainian	86.3%
African	85.7%
Caribbean	85.3%
South Asian	84.8%
German	84.4%
Latin, Central and South American	83.2%
Portuguese	80.6%
Vietnamese	79.3%
Métis	70.4%
Non-status Indian	63.5%
Registered Indian	57.1%
Inuit	54.2%

terms of average individual income (Cooke et al., 2004).

Young Registered Indian women have higher HDI scores than men in all three age groups (Table 6), but this gender gap has been declining for the youngest age groups. These changes in the youth HDI gender gap are due to two different trends. On the one hand, young men’s mortality declined faster than young women’s between 1981 and 2001 (Table 2).

TABLE 5
Average Household Income,⁷ Registered Indian and Other Canadian Youth (15-29), Constant 2000 Dollars, 1980 and 2000

	1980	2000
Age 15-29		
Registered Indian	\$41,012	\$43,391
Other Canadian	\$68,247	\$78,008
Gap	\$27,235	\$34,617
Age 20-24		
Registered Indian	\$38,347	\$41,042
Other Canadian	\$62,460	\$71,185
Gap	\$24,113	\$30,143
Age 25-29		
Registered Indian	\$39,010	\$39,679
Other Canadian	\$57,281	\$64,882
Gap	\$18,271	\$25,203

TABLE 6
Human Development Index (HDI) for Registered Indian Youth (15-29) by Gender and Age Group, 1981 and 2001

	1981	2001
Age 15-19		
Male	.599	.706
Female	.675	.740
Gap	.076	.034
Age 20-24		
Male	.574	.694
Female	.654	.750
Gap	.080	.056
Age 25-29		
Male	.604	.701
Female	.652	.777
Gap	.048	.076

On the other hand, Registered Indian women’s advantage in educational attainment grew, especially among those aged 25-29. By 2001, 64 percent

of women had high school or some post-secondary education, compared with 57 percent of men in this age group.

One aspect of Table 6 which provides a glimpse of future well-being for these youth cohorts is how well-being progresses with age. Intuitively, one would expect well-being to increase with age. This is the case for young Registered Indian women, but not for the men. In 2001, the HDI for young women moves from 0.740 at age 15-19 to 0.777 at age 25-29, while scores for young men remain fairly constant across age groups. For young women, the risk of mortality declines substantially from the teens to the 20s, and the proportion with higher education rises. The lack of such age-related improvements for men suggests that young Registered Indian men are increasingly being "left behind." At the same time however, previous research indicates that the rising educational attainment of Registered Indian women has not appreciably narrowed the income gap with men.

Conclusions

A focus on tracking the conditions of young people is important not only from the perspective of improving their situations today, but also because young people reflect future possibilities for populations and communities. Trends in health, education and income of young

people indicate that, despite some absolute improvements, Registered Indians still lag far behind other young Canadians. In other words, the Registered Indian youth of today are doing much better than their parents at the same age, but they remain near the bottom of the well-being scale relative to other Canadian youth.

The collective failure of federal, provincial, and Aboriginal-led programs and policies to reduce the gap in well-being between Registered Indians and other Canadian youth specifically, has implications for the future. The conditions experienced at young ages affect later life in terms of physical health, economic and social resources, and human capital. Current cohorts of young Registered Indians are entering adulthood with fewer of these resources than other Canadians. This suggests that the closing of the well-being gap that has been seen for the whole population between 1981 and 2001 could stop, and even reverse as these young Registered Indians age, enter the workforce, and start their own families. These observations support the findings of previous research that improvements seen in the past may not continue into the future (O'Sullivan, 2006).

Notes

- 1 References and a complete description of the methodology are available in an extended paper at: <www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ra/pub4_e.html>.
- 2 The Registered Indian youth HDI has three composite indices; income, education, and life expectancy. The HDI for those 15-19 uses a slightly different educational attainment indicator than for those 20 and older.
- 3 Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, unpublished. Registered Indian mortality estimates are taken from estimates produced by Statistics Canada for the purpose of Registered Indian population projections.
- 4 Statistics Canada. Life Tables, Canada, Provinces and Territories. Ottawa, Health Statistics Division, catalogue 84-537-XIE.
- 5 Statistics Canada, 1981 to 2001 Census of Canada, custom tabulations.
- 6 Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada, public use microdata file (pumf). Ethnic groups are defined on the basis of ethnic ancestry, single or multiple responses.
- 7 Custom tabulations of 1981 and 2001 census data. Average household income calculated for individuals, and not adjusted for household size. Average income is the sum of the household income of all individuals in an age group, divided over the number of individuals in that age group.

Full references are available in the online version of this issue. It can be accessed by visiting the PRI web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>

Aboriginal Students and K-12 School Change in British Columbia

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The low high school completion rates of Aboriginal students are a source of concern for Aboriginal parents and communities as well as educators and provincial and territorial ministries of education. In British Columbia public schools,¹ completion rates for Aboriginal students are far from equivalent to those of their non-Aboriginal peers. The most recent (2005-2006) province-wide completion rate for Aboriginal students was 47 percent in contrast to 82 percent for non-Aboriginal students.² There is wide variation in the school-completion rates across communities in British Columbia and often highly variable results within high schools from year to year. This article is about contextual factors associated with this variability. Understanding such factors will assist educators in working toward consistently high, province-wide school completion rates for Aboriginal students.

Investigating Aboriginal Student Mobility

Our research, part of a broad, large-scale exploratory analysis, was conducted with an unusually extensive set of school census data for students over 13 years of age in all public schools in British Columbia (Aman, 2006). These student-level administrative data, masked for anonymity, were collected and generously provided by the British Columbia Ministry of Education. The data gave information on the grade level of students as well as the school locations of students during each school year. At some point in their school career, eight percent of the students identified themselves as "Aboriginal"³ on the student census form collected each

year by the British Columbia Ministry of Education. For this analysis, which focused on students in the secondary grade levels (grades 8 to 12), administrative records were examined for nearly 30,000 Aboriginal students over the school years 1991-1992 to 1998-1999.

Both regression and multi-level modeling were employed to examine the school- and community-level context factors that may be related to differences in Aboriginal school completion. Data collected by the Statistics Canada 2001 Census were used to provide variables related to the socio-economic context for each of the 296 high schools.⁴ The Social Deprivation Index (SDI) number assigned jointly by the BC Ministry of Health and the BC Ministry of Education to communities to distribute additional funding to schools was also a variable of interest.⁵

Cohort differences, such as the number of students enrolled at the school and the demographic composition of students associated with each high school, were determined. Initially, cohort differences across schools were considered in terms of the school in which students were enrolled in their first (Grade 8) year of high school. However, analysis also was conducted on the school cohort composition and school outcomes associated with the school the students attended in their fifth (Grade 12) year of high school. This was in recognition that student demographics in schools may change over the years that a cohort progresses through high school grades. The number and proportion of Aboriginal students at each school and the number and proportion of students who had joined the cohort were explored.

TABLE 1**Number of School Changes and Completion Rates in the 1998 Aboriginal Cohort**

Number of School Changes (High School Only)	Percentage of 1998 Aboriginal Cohort	Six-Year Completion Rate (Graduation June 2004) %
No school changes	31.8	56.4
1 school change	36.6	48.9
2 school changes	19.8	28.1
3 school changes	9.7	17.3
4 school changes	2.6	11.3

Source: Aman (2006).

Differences in the school completion of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student populations at each school were also considered.

Regression analysis and modeling demonstrate that school and community contexts are related to school outcomes, to some degree. For example, Aboriginal school completion diminishes where there are higher proportions of low-income families in school neighbourhoods.⁶ Changing schools also emerged as an important factor: When students change schools, their likelihood of school completion dramatically declines.⁷

Aboriginal High School Mobility and Completion

Many Aboriginal high school students change schools – some quite frequently – throughout their high school years.⁸ Table 1 provides information regarding the most recent cohort of students (n = 4,460) available in the administrative data. The students in this cohort first enrolled in Grade 8 in the 1998-1999 school year; it was anticipated that they would complete high school by June 2004 (i.e., within six years⁹).

The highest secondary school completion rate (56.4%) was obtained by the

31.3 percent of Aboriginal students who never changed high schools. This is substantially higher than the overall completion rate (46%) reported for Aboriginal students in this cohort year.¹⁰ The completion rate of Aboriginal students, who changed schools once during high school, was slightly lower (48.9%) and completion rates declined with each additional school change. For the nearly 20 percent of the Aboriginal students who moved twice during their secondary school years, the completion rate was 28.1 percent. Aboriginal students who changed schools three times had a completion rate of 17.3 percent. The Aboriginal students who changed school four times in the secondary grades had the lowest completion rate (11.3%).

Table 2 details mobility-related completion rates in terms of the locations of the students' initial and destination schools.

For 18 percent of the 1998 Aboriginal cohort, progression in school meant they had to change schools at some point. For example, all students attending a middle school or a junior high school will necessarily change to a secondary school offering senior grades. For these students, completion rates were not substantially different than for students who never changed schools. An estimated 20 percent of the 1998 Aboriginal cohort had changed schools within the same school district. The completion rate of these students was substantially lower than their peers who had not changed schools or who had changed schools due to grade progression. These students had a 28 percent school completion rate. About one third of the province's 1998-1999

TABLE 2**School Completion Rates and Location of School Change in the 1998 Aboriginal Cohort**

Location of School Change (High School Only)	Percentage of 1998 Aboriginal Cohort %	Six-Year Completion Rate (Graduation June 2004) %
No school changes	31.8	56.4
School-structure school change	18.0	58.0
Within-district school change	19.5	28.2
Between-district school change	30.4	29.8

Source: Aman (2006).

Aboriginal cohort moved from a school in one district to a school in another district. These Aboriginal students' six-year completion rate is nearly identical (29.8%) to the completion rate of students who changed schools within districts (28.2%).¹¹

The Policy Challenge for Public School Systems

The identification of school change as a factor strongly correlated with impacts on the educational success of Aboriginal students raises important questions for policy-makers. Non-school-structure change may be driven by a number of external factors, and the factors driving school change among Aboriginal students in particular are not well understood. It is therefore necessary to better understand this phenomenon and to fashion and implement policies and practices to appropriately address the challenges generated by high Aboriginal student mobility.

Literature from Australia (Hotten et al., 2004) and the United States (Rumberger et al., 1999) examines various interventions designed to address impacts of student mobility and may provide useful lessons for supporting Aboriginal school success in Canada. "Newcomer" programs have been put in place in some jurisdictions to better meet the needs of students who are mobile across schools, while other jurisdictions focus on retaining students experiencing residential disruption. Still other programs tend to feature strategies, such as peer support, academic support, staff development, and improved cross-jurisdiction communication and record sharing. Transportation assistance, targeted risk prevention programs, and programs

that aspire to increase community integration are other interventions.

While the findings reported here were generated by a large-scale quantitative analysis, more qualitative and ethnographic work is needed to provide refined information on the extent and nature of Aboriginal student mobility. Also needed is research at the school level to analyze how current practices address issues of student mobility and school completion.

Finally, it is important to exercise caution in framing future courses of inquiry. While residential mobility among Aboriginal families is known to be high, and high student mobility has been shown to be strongly associated with poor school outcomes, it would be a grave error to frame this issue as a "problem" resting with Aboriginal families. The purpose in gaining a greater understanding of the extent and nature of Aboriginal student mobility must be to assist educators in working with Aboriginal students, families and communities toward consistently higher graduation rates and higher achievement in school.

Notes

- 1 Band-operated schools are attended by less than 10 percent of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal students in British Columbia (see Postl, 2005).
- 2 This information is reported on the British Columbia Ministry of Education web site. See <www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/perf2006.pdf>.
- 3 In this paper, the term "Aboriginal" refers to students who have self-identified as being of Aboriginal ancestry on the annual British Columbia Ministry of Education student data collection form (Form 1701). These students may include First Nations, Status Indians, Non-Status Indians, Métis, or Inuit. The authors recognize that the definition of these terms is contested. Students voluntarily declare

themselves Aboriginal, but may choose not to do so consistently every year. For this analysis, we considered students who, at some point in their school career, had declared themselves to be Aboriginal on this school census form.

- 4 The socio-economic variables were rate of educational attainment less than high school, unemployment rate, proportion of families earning under \$20,000 a year, average family income, and the proportion of Aboriginal ethnic origin. These variables may not perfectly reflect conditions associated strictly to school catchment areas, particular demographic groups residing within the area, or be accurate over the period examined, but were considered comprehensive and salient.
- 5 The Social Deprivation Index was the sole measure of health, education, and economic conditions associated with the Aboriginal populations of communities (disaggregated from non-Aboriginal populations of the communities) that was available province-wide.
- 6 Wherever there is a 10 percent increase of families living on low incomes in the school neighbourhood, graduation rates diminish by 0.05 percent.
- 7 Where school change involves a change of school districts, the expected probability of graduation is diminished by 16 percent.
- 8 The incidence of non-Aboriginal students changing high schools between and within school districts was 18 percent in this study.
- 9 School completion is defined as a six-year completion rate in this analysis. On entry to Grade 8, students are given six years to complete high school. Students who finish before six years are counted in calculating the school's completion rate. Students, who do graduate, but take longer than six years, are not counted in the school's completion rate.
- 10 See <www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/perf2006.pdf>.
- 11 It should be emphasized that school change is not necessarily the result of residence change. This data set did not allow for analysis of this factor. School change may be the result of school choice exercised by the student, program availability, residence move, or other individual considerations.

University Attainment of the Registered Indian Population, 1981-2001

A Cohort Approach

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The gap between the educational and labour market outcomes of Canada's Aboriginal peoples compared to non-Aboriginal Canadians has been extensively documented (Hull, 2005; Mendelsohn, 2006). Recent literature, however, has found encouraging signs of progress: improvements have been observed in high school and non-university post-secondary completion rates (Maxim and White, 2005). It has also been shown that Aboriginal people who graduate from university encounter labour market outcomes similar to those of their non-Aboriginal counterparts. These results are reflected in the improvement in the Registered Indian Human Development Index (Beavon et al., 2004) in which basic functional

literacy (Grade 9 achievement) is an essential component.¹

However, while these developments are to be celebrated, they do not tell the whole story. Specifically, educational improvements within the Registered Indian population have not kept pace with the increasing educational attainment experienced by non-Aboriginal Canadians, particularly with regard to completion of university degrees. This situation is of particular importance given the increasing focus of Canada and other OECD countries on improving educational outcomes of children and youth to engage and reap benefits in an increasingly competitive and changing global and knowledge-based economy. Recently published statistics

FIGURE 1

Proportion of Registered Indians and Other Canadians with a University Degree, 2001



show higher rates of university enrolment, which reflect the need for higher educational requirements for occupations in the new global economy (Statistics Canada, 2005).

This article uses a cohort analysis approach to analyze census data to show the persistence of the gap in university completion between Registered Indians² and other Canadians.³ It should be noted that important historical events have affected the Registered Indian population over time such as the enactment of Bill C-31 in 1985 and the incomplete enumeration of reserves in the Census. These data issues and their possible implications are discussed at length in the forthcoming comprehensive report on this subject. This article refers to data on the highest level of schooling for the Registered Indian and other Canadian populations during the 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, and 2001 census periods.

Overall University Attainment of Registered Indians and Other Canadians in 2001

As shown in Figure 1, Registered Indians are far less likely than other Canadians to have earned a university degree, at all age groups. One point of interest is the age groups in which both populations have the highest proportion with a university degree. For the Registered Indian population, older age cohorts (30 years and older) appear to possess slightly higher proportions with a university degree than younger ones; in contrast, among other Canadians the younger cohorts

FIGURE 2

Proportion of the Other Canadian Population with a University Degree, Seven Cohorts Aged from 1981 to 2001

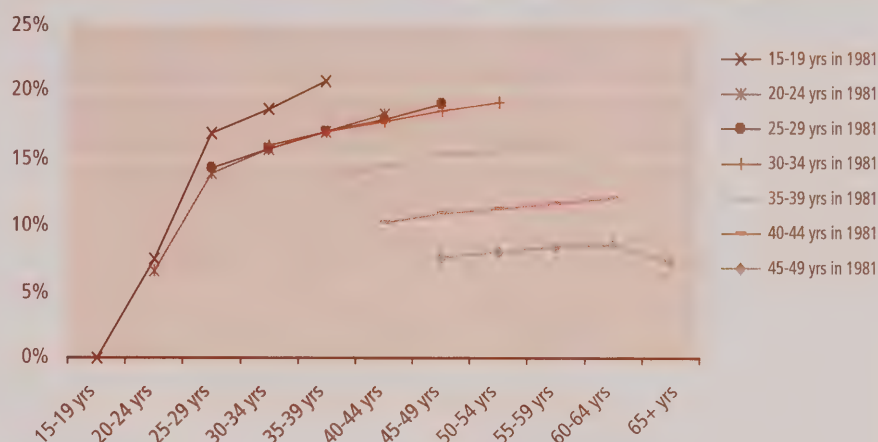


FIGURE 3

Proportion of Registered Indians with a University Degree, Seven Cohorts Aged from 1981 to 2001



have higher proportions with university degrees followed by the middle-aged groups of 40-44 and 45-49 year olds. For the 25-29 and 30-34 age groups, the proportion of other Canadians with a university degree is over five times that of the Registered Indian population.

Age Cohort Analysis

Using this analytical approach, we can track the progress of seven age cohorts from 15-19 years to 45-49 years from 1981 to 2001. This allows us to observe the extent of improvement in educational performance. Intuitively, each cohort would show

some improvement over its predecessor; however, for the “gap” between Registered Indians and other Canadians to close, improvements made by the Registered Indian population would have to outstrip those made by other Canadians.

Figures 2 and 3 depict the progress of the seven age cohorts in the other Canadian and Registered Indian populations through the 20-year time period. The age cohort trend lines can be described as “connecting the dots” from a particular age cohort beginning in the 1981 Census and aging it through successive census periods until the last census period in 2001 is reached. This results in an age cohort trend line composed of five discrete census data points for each of the seven age cohorts.

For the other Canadian population, all age cohort lines show progress in attainment of university credentials from 1981 to 2001 particularly for the younger age cohorts. After 20 years, the age cohorts of 15-19, 20-24, and 25-29 year olds in 1981 have the highest proportions with a university degree in 2001. The older age cohorts possess much flatter trend lines or slopes than their younger counterparts during this period indicating only small increases in the attainment of a university degree, which is to be expected.

For the Registered Indian population, however, age cohort lines for those under the age of 35 in 1981 show only slight progress in attainment of university credentials from 1981 to 2001. Unlike those of other

Canadians, the age cohorts of 25-29 and 30-34 year olds in 1981 had the highest proportions with a university degree in 2001.

Although not shown graphically in this article, one can also examine the gender differences in age cohort progress in obtaining a university degree. For the other Canadian male population, the age cohort that experienced the largest gain in the

For the “gap” between Registered Indians and other Canadians to close, improvements made by the Registered Indian population would have to outstrip those made by other Canadians.

proportion obtaining a university degree over the 20-year time frame were 15-19 year olds. However, the proportion of the population obtaining a university degree for this age cohort in 2001 was similar to the other four youngest cohorts at around 20 percent.

Likewise, for the other Canadian female population, all age cohorts except the oldest (45-49 years) experienced gains in the proportions with a university degree over the 20-year period. However, the two youngest cohorts of 15-19 and 20-24 year olds made the largest gains in the proportion of individuals obtaining a university degree from 1981 to 2001, increasing from 0 to 21 percent and 7 to 18 percent respectively.

For Registered Indian males, progress in obtaining a university degree was small for all seven age cohorts over the 20-year period from 1981 to 2001.

Some slight gains were experienced by the 15-19 and 20-24 year old cohorts from 1981 to 2001, increasing from 0 to 4 percent and 1 to 3 percent respectively. The age cohorts of 25-29 and 30-34 year olds possessed the largest proportions with a university degree at the end of this period in 2001. However, it should be noted that decreases in the proportions obtaining a university degree occurred

between the 1981 and 1986 censuses for all age cohorts except for the two youngest. To date, there is no explanation to account for this decrease between these two census years. However, it may be due to changes in the participation of First Nations reserves in the census.

For the Registered Indian female population, there was progress for all age cohorts in the proportions obtaining their university degree from 1981 to 2001. In particular, the progress, although small, was almost double that experienced by their male counterparts over the same period. Over the 20-year period, it was the youngest three age cohorts of 15-19, 20-24, and 25-29 year olds that experienced the largest gains overall. But similar to Registered Indian males, it was the 25-29 and 30-34 year old cohorts that obtained the largest proportions with a university degree in 2001.

Concluding Remarks

To summarize, the age cohort approach using census data represents a useful and age-specific tool for examining educational outcomes for the Registered Indian population, and for measuring the extent to which recent gains observed in terms of functional literacy lead to improvement and to a gradual closing of the well-being gap between Registered Indians and other Canadians. The key finding from this approach, that the university completion gap has been widening substantially, is instructive.

From 1981 to 2001, all seven age cohorts for the other Canadian population experienced an increase in the proportion of those obtaining a university degree, with the largest gains over the 20-year period in the two youngest cohorts, although the next two oldest cohorts of 25-29 and 30-34 year olds achieved similar proportions with a university degree (20%) after 20 years. Unfortunately, the age cohorts in the Registered Indian population experienced small or very little change in their proportions over the same period. From a gender perspective, Registered Indian females experienced small noticeable gains in the proportions obtaining a university degree, particularly for the younger cohorts of 15-19 and 20-24 year olds in the 20-year period; however, Registered Indian females still greatly lagged behind other Canadian women in the proportions of those obtaining a university degree between 1981 and 2001.

The fact that Registered Indians appear to be falling further behind other Canadians in comparable age groups, in terms of post-secondary attainment, warrants concern. Post-secondary attainment is well known to be a key predictor of lifetime earnings potential (Howe, 2002). Research also shows that educational outcomes are themselves highly correlated with socio-economic status; thus, one finds higher educational success for children in families with higher levels of education and income (Gorard et al., 2001). Additionally, precursors, such as health status and emotional and behavioural disorders, have been shown to be related to social economic status where both adults and children of lower socio-economic levels suffer poorer health and are more likely to experience emotional and behavioural distress than families in higher social and income levels (Brownell et al., 2006).

Thus, while Registered Indians have made some progress in their social and economic standing in Canada in recent years, they remain far behind other Canadians in terms of socio-economic status. This means they may face additional barriers in further improving their life chances in the future. With higher educational credentials needed to obtain entry-level positions, Registered Indians and other Aboriginal peoples are at risk of stalling their current progress and ultimately falling further behind other Canadians.

Notes

- 1 The results presented in this article are excerpts from a forthcoming report to be published by the Research and Analysis Division of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
- 2 Only the Registered Indian population is suitable to this cohort analysis approach since comparable data for the other Aboriginal identity groups (North American Indian, Inuit and Métis) are not available prior to the 1996 Census. More importantly, some of these Aboriginal identity groups are heavily influenced by "ethnic mobility" factors that cause increases in population counts not solely explainable by traditional demographic factors (Guimond, 2003).
- 3 For the purposes of this analysis, the term "other Canadians" refers to the vast majority of citizens who are not Aboriginal as well as those Aboriginal people who are not Registered Indians (including Métis, Inuit, Non-Status Indians). "Registered Indians" are those individuals entitled under the *Indian Act* legislation to be registered as an Indian and thus able to receive benefits and rights as outlined under this Act.

Full references are available in the online version of this issue. It can be accessed by visiting the PRI web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>

The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation Aboriginal Success Stories

Roberta Jamieson
President
National Aboriginal
Achievement Foundation

The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF) offers proof-positive that our youth have ample personal resources to succeed if there is money available to empower them to change their own future and the future of their communities, making their full contribution to Canada.

NAAF is a registered charity with an eminent and professional board. It receives money from corporate donors, First Nations, organizations, individuals and federal, provincial and territorial governments. The Foundation is devoted to excellence and to providing Aboriginal youth with the tools necessary for achieving brighter futures. It encourages and empowers them by providing important career-planning information, by connecting them with industry, and by providing financial support for post-secondary studies in all disciplines.

Since 1988, NAAF has evolved into the largest non-governmental funding body for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis post-secondary students across Canada. This year alone, the Foundation provided post-secondary bursaries totaling \$3.2 million to over 900 deserving First Nations, Inuit and Métis recipients from our Scholarships and Bursaries program. They are a shining testimony to aspiration, personal triumph, achievement, hard work, overcoming barriers, and the pursuit of promising futures.

The Foundation already provides First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth with more scholarship funding than any other agency in Canada outside the federal government. But we can – and must – do more! It would be misleading to admire the Foundation's success if we don't also recognize that there is another side to the story. Many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students do not go on to high school, and if they do start, do not graduate. For them, for Canada, the potential for success decays into wasted potential, wasted opportunity, and dashed hope.

What would be a true "success" would be to alleviate the current unacceptable gap between the high potential and low achievement found among Aboriginal youth of Canada. Indeed this will not close on its own. Left unattended, it will widen and be passed on to the next generation and will be a costly burden for Canada to bear financially, socially, and politically if not addressed now.

According to research done by the Centre for the Study of Living Standards and released in November 2007, if we could close the gap between the education of First Nation, Inuit and Métis children and youth as compared to the Canadian population generally, there would be \$71 billion added to Canada's Gross Domestic Product over the next ten years. Investment of public and private resources to realize the potential of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth is not an act of kindness;



Source: Fred Cattroll, courtesy of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation

it is essential if Canada is to have a prosperous future.

In this context, the cost of providing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth access to better educational opportunities is a handsome investment to be realized in the very near future and it is an investment that will generate significant returns for generations to come.

And there is another important dividend: alleviating the challenge of labour shortages that reduce economic productivity. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people will constitute an important share of Canada's labour force – especially if the gap is closed (See

the article from Jeremy Hull in this volume). Aboriginal people will account for a growing share of Canada's annual natural population increase between now and 2017 — a population increase consisting entirely of children and youth.

Closing the gap is too complex for the federal government to do it alone – provincial and territorial governments, Aboriginal communities and organizations, professional associations, the private sector, unions and employers must also be strongly committed. The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation is well-positioned to be a key player in

combining these resources to achieve the success we need. These actions constitute "Success."

Information is on the Foundation's web site, <www.naaf.ca>.

Aboriginal Youth in the Canadian Labour Market¹

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In recent years, alarms have been raised about a possible crisis in the Canadian labour force — a shortage of labour caused by low birth rates and the aging of the Canadian population. Studies have suggested that this declining growth of the labour force will have a negative impact on the economy.

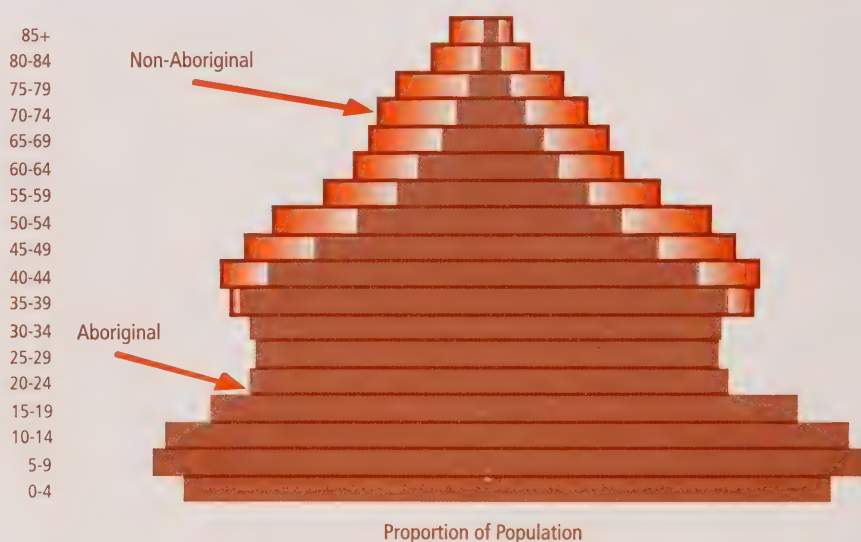
Proposed responses to this crisis have focused on retaining older workers in the labour force and attracting immigrant workers, and the growing Aboriginal labour has not been given much attention. The rapid growth rate of the Aboriginal labour force presents an opportunity to offset these demographic pressures to some extent and could benefit both Aboriginal people and the Canadian economy.

The Aboriginal population, particularly Aboriginal youth, tend to have lower rates of labour force participation than other Canadians. Past research has shown that this is related to the levels of education attained and to geographic location, among other factors. Readers should keep in mind that this article is a simplified presentation of a complex set of issues, and that the Aboriginal population is in reality much more diverse than described here. These details are important from a policy perspective, and we will return to the need for more detailed analysis in the conclusions.

The Aboriginal population² is much younger than the general Canadian population. In 2001, the

FIGURE 1

Distribution of the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Populations of Canada in 2001



largest age group among the Canadian population, the “baby boom” generation, was 35-49 years old, while the largest Aboriginal age group was 0-14 years old (See Figure 1). By the year 2021, the bulk of Canadian baby boomers will be over the age of 55, while the largest Aboriginal age group will be 20-34 years old. The current Aboriginal age structure, combined with a relatively high birth rate result in a projected growth of the Aboriginal population, ages 15-64, of 48 percent between 2001 and 2026. In contrast, the general Canadian population within this age group is projected to reach its peak in about 2016, after which it is expected to remain static.

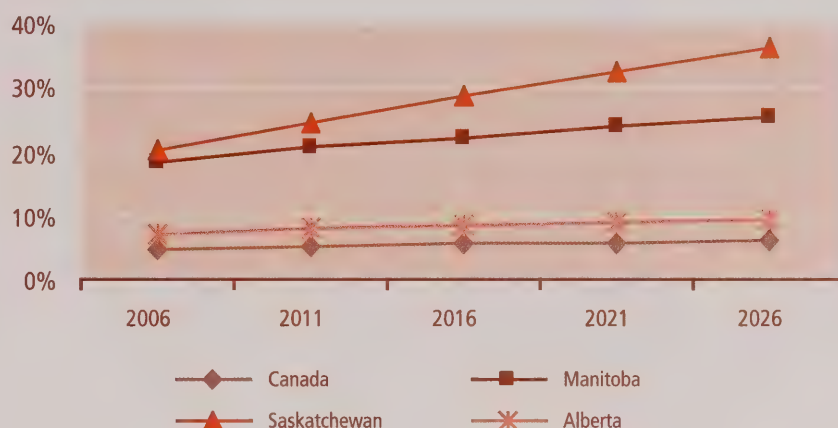
The youth segment of the Aboriginal population will continue to increase, even after the youth segment of the Canadian population begins to decline.

The younger segment of the Aboriginal population, 15-29 years old, is projected to grow rapidly from 2001 to 2011, and then a little more slowly after 2011. By 2026, this population is expected to be 37 percent larger than in 2001. During this same period, the general Canadian population in the 15-29 year-old age range is expected to peak in 2011 and then to decline so that it will be only six percent higher in 2026 than it was in 2001.

In Canada it is estimated that approximately 25,000 Aboriginal youth turn 15 each year, and this number is expected to increase after 2016. Between 2001 and 2026, more than 600,000

FIGURE 2

Projected Aboriginal Share of the Population 15-29 Years Old Canada and the Prairie Provinces, 2006-2026



Aboriginal youth will come of age to enter the labour market, with the potential to make a major contribution to the Canadian economy. Five provinces – Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia – will each see approximately 100,000 or more Aboriginal youth turning 15 over that time period.

The Aboriginal population is a small proportion of the total Canadian labour force, but it is a large proportion of the labour force in some provinces and regions. In 2001, the Aboriginal population accounted for about four percent of the population aged 15-64 in Canada. Although the Aboriginal population will grow more quickly than the general Canadian population, it will still only reach about five percent of the total labour force population by 2026. However, the Aboriginal population is a much

larger component in some provinces and regions, especially Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northern Canada. In Saskatchewan, the Aboriginal population already makes up a large share of the total labour force, and is projected to be 28 percent of the labour force age group by 2026. In Manitoba, this proportion is expected to reach 22 percent in 2026, while in Alberta it is expected to reach eight percent. In Northern Canada, including Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, the Aboriginal population makes up a large majority.³

The Aboriginal population is a large and growing proportion of the younger population in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and is also significant in Alberta. As illustrated in Figure 2, 36 percent of the younger labour force population in Saskatchewan is expected to be Aboriginal in 2026. In Manitoba, this proportion is projected

FIGURE 3
Employment Rate of the Population 15-64 Years Old
by Educational Certification and Identity, Canada, 2001

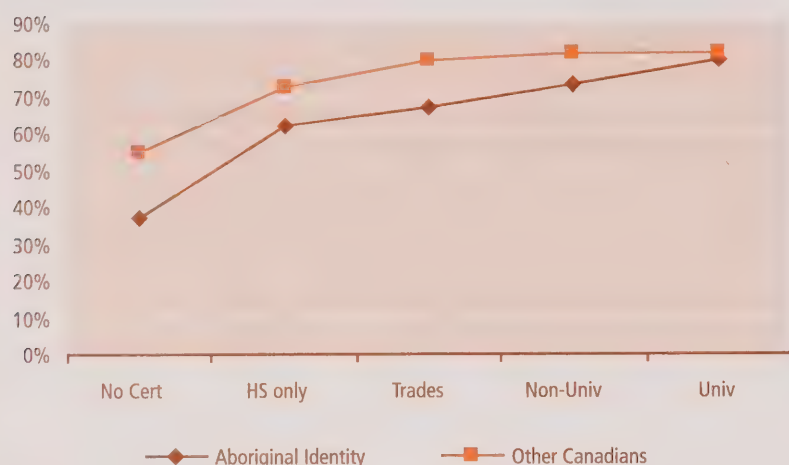
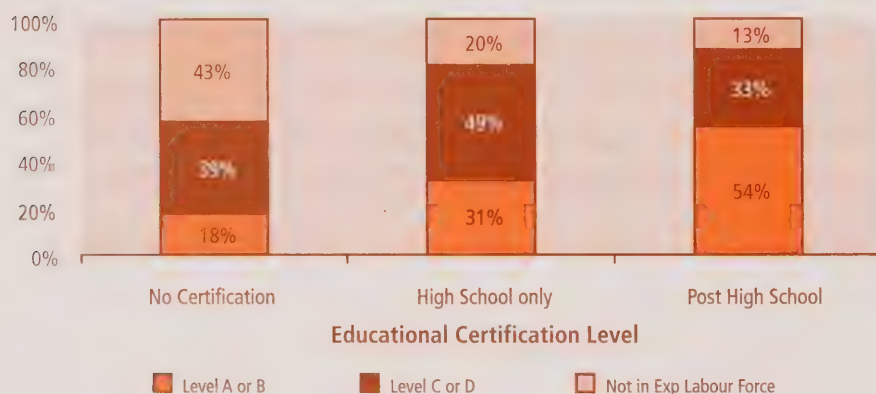


FIGURE 4
Occupational Level of the Aboriginal Population 15-64 Years Old
By Educational Certification, Canada, 2001



to be 28 percent, while in Alberta, it is projected to be nine percent. While the size of the Aboriginal populations in these three provinces is similar, the size of the other Canadian population is much larger in Alberta. In addition,

provincial immigration trends are quite different in these provinces.

To a large degree, educational attainment reduces the employment gap between the Aboriginal and general

Canadian populations. A key factor in labour market participation is the completion of various levels of educational certification, such as a high school graduation certificate or a post-secondary certificate or degree.⁴ As illustrated in Figure 3, the employment rate among the Aboriginal population increases with educational certification, reaching a rate of 80 percent for those with university degrees or certificates, equal to the employment rate of the general Canadian population with this level of education. At lower levels of education, however, there is a large gap between the Aboriginal and other Canadian employment rates, especially among those without any type of high school or post-secondary certification.

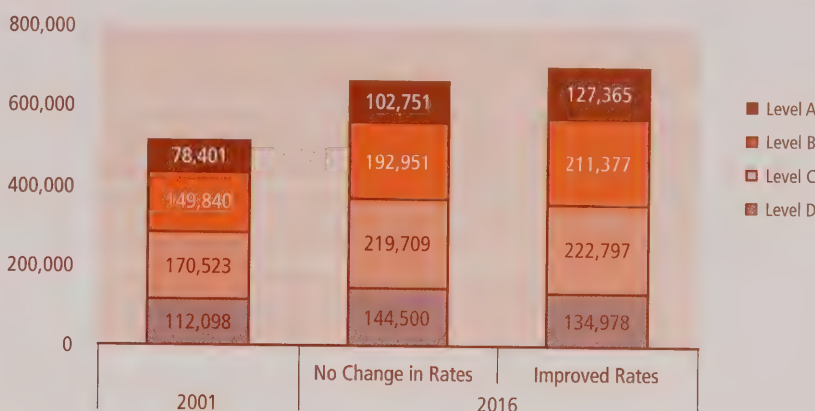
Occupational skill levels are also strongly influenced by educational certification. Generally, professional, technical and managerial occupations (shown as levels A and B in Figure 3) require high school completion and either post-secondary training, apprenticeship or extensive experience and on-the-job training. Semi-skilled and unskilled occupations (levels C and D) usually require a high school education or less. Among the Aboriginal population without any certification, only 18 percent have worked in level A or B occupations. Among those with a high school certificate, this increases to 31 percent of the population, while among those with post-secondary certification, the proportion in level A or B occupations increases to 54 percent. A large proportion of those without certification, 43 percent, were not in the experienced labour force at all (See Figure 4).

Rates of educational certification are relatively low among Aboriginal youth. In 2001, only 40 percent of Aboriginal youth, ages 15-29, had high school or higher certification, compared to 65 percent of other Canadian youth. Among both the Aboriginal population and other Canadians these proportions are much higher for those who are 30-49 years old, and the gap between the Aboriginal population and others is somewhat smaller for this age group. Within this age group, 59 percent of the Aboriginal population and 79 percent of the other Canadian population have some type of educational certification. This reflects educational patterns in Canada, where many people continue to pursue educational qualifications throughout their lives. This is especially the case among the Aboriginal population. The older the Aboriginal population is, the greater the proportion who have achieved certification (Hull, 2004).

Educational attainment has been increasing among the Aboriginal population. Studies of Aboriginal educational attainment have consistently shown increasing educational levels among the Aboriginal population and increasing numbers of Aboriginal students completing high school and attending post-secondary colleges and universities. These educational trends are strongest among the Aboriginal population over the age of 25. For example, between 1991 and 2001 the proportion of the Registered Indian population, aged 25-44, with secondary or post-secondary certification increased from about 52 to 61 percent.⁵

FIGURE 5

Projected Aboriginal Experienced Labour Force 15-64 Years Old in 2016, Comparing Educational Certification Scenarios, Canada



The size of the projected Aboriginal labour force depends in part on Aboriginal educational trends. In looking at future trends, we can assume that there will be no change in educational attainment levels, or we can assume that Aboriginal educational levels will continue to increase as they have done over the past ten years. Under the first assumption, the Aboriginal labour force is projected to increase from 510,000 in 2001 to 650,000 in 2016. Under the second assumption, the Aboriginal labour force is expected to increase to 690,000 in 2016. In other words, there will be approximately 40,000 more Aboriginal people participating in the labour force if Aboriginal educational levels continue to improve than there will be if educational levels do not improve (See Figure 5).

Higher educational levels also result in larger numbers in higher skill level occupations, and lower numbers in

lower skill level occupations. The assumption that there will be increasing educational levels results in about 25,000 more Aboriginal people in level A occupations, 18,000 more in level B occupations, and a reduction of about 10,000 in level D occupations by 2016. Since the jobs that are most likely to experience labour shortages are the more highly skilled occupations, educational trends will help determine the extent to which Aboriginal labour can help meet the demand.

The impact of an increase in the Aboriginal labour force will be different in various provinces and regions. Under the improving educational assumption, the number of Aboriginal labour force participants is projected to increase by more than 7,000 in Ontario by 2016. In the four western provinces, improved educational levels will result in 5,000 to 6,500 additional Aboriginal labour force participants, depending on the

province. In Northern Canada, the impact is projected to be about 3,000 additional labour force participants, while in Québec and the Atlantic region, the impact will be about 2,700 and 2,000 respectively.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that the Aboriginal labour force is a significant potential resource within Canada — a resource that is currently under-utilized in the economy. Hundreds of thousands of young Aboriginal people will enter the work force over the coming years. If their educational levels remain at current levels, however, many will not find a place in the labour market, or they will be employed in lower skill level occupations. This will be detrimental to the economy as a whole since the greatest demand for labour is expected to be in higher skill level occupations. On the other hand, if Aboriginal educational levels continue to improve as they have over the past decade or more, the numbers of Aboriginal people in more highly skilled occupations will increase. Any success that can be achieved in improving Aboriginal educational levels will pay dividends to the Canadian economy by improving the availability of skilled labour and reducing labour shortages. These improvements will be especially important in certain provinces and regions, particularly in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Northern Canada, Alberta and the Atlantic region.

Three complementary strategies are suggested to increase the participation of Aboriginal people in the economy:

1. **Strengthen the basic elementary-secondary educational system** to better prepare

Aboriginal youth for the labour market and further education. While the numbers of Aboriginal high school graduates and post-secondary participants have increased, Aboriginal completion rates remain much lower than the Canadian average. In addition, those Aboriginal youth who are successful in completing various levels of education are taking longer than others to achieve this success. At this point, the focus needs to turn to strengthening the quality of basic education received by Aboriginal students, including the key threshold of high school completion.

2. **Expand opportunities for Aboriginal adults to obtain needed educational qualifications and occupational training.** The reality, as described above, is that many Aboriginal adults continue their educational pursuits over the course of many years; indeed this is a strength among Aboriginal students. While post-secondary education institutions and programs have become increasingly flexible in making programs available to mature students, more attention needs to be paid to employer-based training programs that can help integrate Aboriginal youth into the labour force.
3. **Focus on selected industries, regions and populations.** It is apparent that there are key occupations and industries, such as skilled trades within the construction industry, that are likely to face labour shortages, and that some of these industries are located within regions where there is a relatively large Aboriginal labour force.

However, the details concerning specific geographic regions, industries, and occupations are not well-known and need to be identified, as do the characteristics of the Aboriginal populations of these regions. Aboriginal peoples are diverse, and this diversity must be considered when designing policies and programs. It will be important to identify these industries, regions and populations to ensure that educational and training efforts designed for Aboriginal students will produce graduates who meet the needs of the economy while fulfilling their own aspirations.

Notes

- 1 This summary is based largely on the study, *Aboriginal Youth in the Canadian Labour Market*, prepared by Jeremy Hull for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Research and Analysis Directorate, June, 2006. Data used here are derived from Clatworthy 2006, Statistics Canada 2005 and from the 2001 Census of Canada.
- 2 Unless otherwise stated the Aboriginal population referred to in this paper is the population who identified themselves as Aboriginal on the Census of Canada.
- 3 Differences in projection methods for the Aboriginal population (Clatworthy, 2006) and the Canadian population (Statistics Canada) make it difficult to directly compare these two sets of projection numbers in the North.
- 4 Other factors, such as age, gender and geographic location are also important (See Hull, 2004).
- 5 The "Registered Indian" (those identifying themselves on the Census as registered under the *Indian Act*) is more stable from Census to Census and provides a better indicator of trends than the general Aboriginal population.

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Factoring that Affects the Education and Work Transitions of First Nations Youth

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The idea that young adults follow a linear and sequential movement toward their education and career goals has been challenged by researchers (Dwyer and Wyn, 2001; Looker and Dwyer, 1998; Raffe, 2003; te Riele, 2004). In particular, the idea of linear transitions may not acknowledge the complexity of pathways: the focus on school-to-paid-work transitions may neglect other important youth transitions, and the individualism of pathways discourse mistakenly assumes that pathways are equally accessible to all young people (Raffe, 2003). Some writers argue that the idea of a linear pathway was only ever applicable to a minority of young people (cf., Dwyer and Wyn, 2001). For example, Looker and Dwyer (1998) reported findings from longitudinal studies of youth in Canada and Australia, which suggested that the transition experiences of rural youth are qualitatively different from those of urban youth and do not conform to the "linear pathways" metaphor.

Some findings related to rural youth also describe the experiences of First Nations youth. However, little empirical work focuses on the transition process for these youth. One exception is Gabor et al. (1996), who suggested that a lack of housing, transportation, and employment opportunities limited the options for Aboriginal youth who wished to stay on reserves. Our article takes a closer look at the institutional and personal factors that influence the career pathways of First Nations youth in Alberta, Canada. We consider issues pertinent to the kindergarten to Grade 12 system as well as access to post-secondary

education (PSE) and work opportunities for Aboriginal youth living on a reserve in southern Alberta.

This study began with an evaluation of a provincial summer work experience program, which encourages high school students to enter health care occupations. Thirty interviews or focus groups were conducted between 2004 and 2006 with interviews fully transcribed. Computer software NUDIST 6 was used to code data and organize our analysis.

Secondary Schooling On and Off Reserves

Canadian provinces have jurisdictional control over education except with respect to First Nations education, which since Confederation has been the responsibility of the federal government, although control can be delegated to communities. In fact, steps have been taken by many First Nations communities over the past 30 years to re-assert their inherent rights with regard to control and management of their educational institutions. For example, the reserve that we focus on in this paper¹ has had "band control" over education since 1988; that is, the band's school board is able to hire teachers and operate schools within the constraints of funding provided by the federal government.

That said, the experience on the ground with respect to jurisdiction is not always cut and dried. For example, provincial governments may enact education laws that affect First Nations students in the provincial school system, while many schools on reserves follow provincial curriculum (Morgan, 2002).

Of particular interest for the purposes of this analysis is the fact that an increasing proportion of children from families living on the reserve attend provincial schools (off reserve). Reportedly, this involves over half of high school age students. Money is transferred from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to these provincial schools via “tuition agreements.”

Participants in the study suggest that students attend schools off the reserve for various reasons. Some families live closer to schools located off the reserve. Others find it difficult to access housing on the reserve. For high school age students, schools in urban centres, with amenities close by, are appealing. Further, students who plan to pursue post-secondary education may attend school off the reserve in an effort to ease the transition. The reserve schools may be perceived as providing less rigorous preparation for PSE.

To some extent, this perception becomes self-fulfilling since the “choices” of families to attend school on or off the reserve have an effect on the student mix which, in turn, affects programming. For example, if a disproportionate number of students with special needs attends schools on the reserve (as a school district representative suggested), programming will be oriented more to these students. Further, funding for these students is reportedly less in reserve schools than provincial schools, creating additional challenges. Also, if teacher contracts are less favourable on reserves compared to provincial schools (as was reported in interviews), it may be more difficult to attract and retain teachers. These

factors affect perceptions and the ability of reserve schools to retain students generally and “academic” students in particular (See also Steinhauer, 2007).

School staff on this reserve also noted challenges in trying to provide work experience and other career exploration opportunities for students, because of the size of the reserve, a lack of public transportation, limited placement opportunities, and scheduling challenges. For example, it can be difficult to find supervisors and placements for students interested in skilled trades work on reserves, because of the lack of an employer base. Placements off reserve are also difficult to secure, because reserve schools must compete with provincial schools to secure work placements with employers. Arranging transportation for students on a large reserve can be challenging. Therefore, it is predictably more difficult for students attending school on reserves to develop clearly defined horizons for action with respect to further education and work. These observations are consistent with the observation that rural communities across Canada find it more difficult to implement effective school-to-career strategies (Canadian Council on Learning, 2006), although the poor conditions within First Nations communities arguably add to the challenge (Armstrong, 2001; White and Maxim, 2007).

Access To and Challenges of Post-Secondary Education

After completing high school, students’ PSE pathways are affected by the availability of funding, the availability of further education

opportunities on or near the reserve, and the support provided by institutions for Aboriginal students.

Although status Indians in Canada are theoretically eligible for PSE funding, the Assembly of First Nations estimated that over 8,000 Aboriginal applicants did not receive funding in 2000-2001 (Malatest and Associates, 2004: 20). In the community in southern Alberta that we focus on, a band representative noted that they have been able to fund fewer than half of the applicants requesting funding in recent years. Funding is allocated to students by First Nations and Inuit organizations according to their priorities and eligibility criteria. However, citing an increase in costs and the number of eligible students, the federal government’s Post-secondary Student Support Program, launched in 1989, apparently introduced funding restrictions for Indian and Inuit post-secondary students (Wotherspoon and Satzewich, 2000). Therefore, the increasing educational attainment of First Nations students essentially means that more students compete for fewer resources. The assumption within funding guidelines of a linear, direct pathway also penalizes students who drop out, transfer institutions or programs, or fail their year.

Although educators encouraged students to go directly to university, a more common route for First Nations students is to take two-year college programs that transfer to university programs. Of the funded students from the reserve we focused on, just over half attended college and the remainder attended university. It was often easier for students to get

accepted to some college programs and was a more comfortable transition. This is consistent with the finding that American Indians and some other minority groups in the United States disproportionately rely on community colleges as their point of initial access to higher education (Richardson, 1990, cited in Archibald et al., 2002).

Access to PSE options on reserves is another important element of learning and work pathways for First Nations students. On the reserve in our study, a band-operated college opened in the latter part of the 1980s in an old residential school building. Although it initially offered only upgrading, it currently brokers most courses through local colleges and universities in the areas of arts and science, oil and gas petroleum administration, Aboriginal culture, and social work. But some students taking programs at the tribal college are reportedly concerned about whether their certification will be recognized off the reserve. Aboriginal institutions may obtain accreditation of programs through an affiliation agreement with an accredited university or college (usually for a single course or program) or they may apply to provincially established accreditation agencies or bodies, which is a more complicated process (Morgan and Louie, 2006). As the president of a tribal college commented: "The only way to get recognition is to work as a mainstream institution" (Barnsley, 2005).

Alternatively, colleges can seek accreditation through the First Nations Accreditation Board (FNAB), which

involves carrying out a self-study report followed by an on-site audit by the Board. However, the current status of the FNAB is unclear (Morgan and Louie, 2006) and provincial governments do not necessarily recognize this accreditation. Therefore, tribal colleges appear to face a catch-22 situation in that they are often established in opposition to mainstream institutions yet must harmonize with these institutions if their students' credentials are to be recognized off the reserve.

Beyond programs on the reserve, there were at least three colleges and two universities within 300 kilometres of the centre of the reserve. Most institutions provide some support for Native students, which is very important according to band representatives. In some ways, First Nations students who want to pursue PSE are similar to other rural youth in that they usually face higher financial costs and are likely to feel cut off from social support networks (Looker and Dwyer, 1998). But our interviews with a small group of students who aspired to PSE found that they also had child-care (e.g., younger siblings) or elder-care responsibilities. Therefore, the emotional as well as financial "costs" of further education can be significant. First Nations students continue to represent a minority within off-reserve institutions and often feel alienated, despite institutional efforts to provide support (Smith, 1999). The preceding discussion helps us to understand the reasons for the extended and non-linear pathways of many Aboriginal students (cf. Breaker and Kawaguchi, 2002).

Employment Opportunities on Reserves

The idea of youth transitions from formal education to work assumes that youth know about different career options, have adequate information to make decisions and will be able to access employment that matches their skills. However, the reserve that we focus on had an unemployment rate estimated at 40 to 50 percent by a staff member in the Employment and Skills Training department of the band government (interview, February 2006). This range is consistent with the figures reported in the 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (Statistics Canada, 2001). The main employers were the tribal administration, departments and entities (e.g., health, education), and an agriculture project. Youth unemployment was also a concern. For example, although the Employment and Skills Training department ran a summer employment program for students, only about one third of applicants typically found placements. Since the average educational attainment of band members is increasing, this raises the important question of where the education will lead.

An important tension in the discussion of pathways for First Nations students relates to the goal of trying to attract professional people back to the community when much of the available work on the reserve is said to be unskilled, and opportunities, even for professional work, are limited in certain ways (cf. Gabor et al., 1996). For example, two of the largest employers on the reserve we focus on are health and education depart-

ments. Each employs about 200 people, and the number of Aboriginal professionals has increased over time. For example, a band representative noted that about 10 percent of teachers employed were Aboriginal in the late 1980s, whereas by 2006 this had grown to 90 percent of teachers with certificates. However, the school board is perceived to be “running out of positions” on the reserve for newly trained teachers (interview, February 2006). The development of viable and transparent pathways for young people, therefore, must include providing adequate academic preparation for PSE, opportunities for career exploration, support for the pursuit of PSE and, ultimately, a commitment to providing work for successful graduates.

Life Transitions and Culture

The preceding discussion has identified some of the institutional constraints faced by First Nations youth in the areas of compulsory education, post-secondary education, and work. While this analysis highlights reasons for their “non-linear” pathways, it is important to recognize that youth participants do not necessarily give the same priority to career transitions as do policy-makers. For example, participants valued family as well as a satisfying career and expressed a strong sense of responsibility to community. Further, culture and spirituality have been and continue to be critical in their pathways to adulthood. Most of the young people attended and took part in traditional ceremonies and some aspired to take on respected roles within cultural societies. They tended to see their cultural and spiritual traditions as foundational for

their future development. Therefore, career transitions were seen as part of broader life transitions and students expressed the need to balance work goals with other goals related to family, spirituality, culture, and community. Again, a narrow focus on policy work related to school-to-work transition is not likely to capture these important aspects of youth pathways and is an area where further research is needed. Starting with where young people are rather than from a predetermined script regarding what youth pathways should look like is critical to such research.

Implications of Findings

The comment of a student participant that “I just go step by step” is typical of the incremental approach to pathways exhibited by the First Nations youth in our study. Although these young people aspired to PSE and had either completed or were on track to complete high school, their pathways were not linear. Our analysis identifies some of the institutional and personal factors related to compulsory schooling, PSE, and work that provide insight into student “choices.”

To summarize, schools on reserves were perceived to be constrained in terms of resources for programming, higher than average numbers of students with special needs, and limited opportunities for career education. Students attending these schools had to deal with the perception that the quality of education was lower than that provided in provincial schools. Access to PSE was limited by the increasing scarcity of federal funding for First Nations students and the availability of programs on reserves.

Further, the additional financial and emotional costs of moving away from home, and leaving behind peers, family, and culture posed challenges for youth. Finally, it was not clear that further education guaranteed work. Given these factors, youth did not make educational decisions in isolation from other decisions related to work, family, and community (cf. Looker and Dwyer, 1998).

Facilitating career pathways for First Nations youth requires greater attention to ensuring that students are made aware of and are able to meet the requirements for entry to PSE programs, and that educational institutions support Aboriginal students. Ideally, a broader range of PSE options would be available on reserves. But given the incremental process followed by young people and the large number of adults that are involved in upgrading on the reserve, it is equally important for employers (with government support) to provide opportunities for workers to “ladder” into more highly skilled positions. Finally, it needs to be clear to graduates that they will find rewarding work.

Note

- 1 This reserve is one of the largest in Canada with a population of about 10,000 people. Comparing this treaty area with others across Canada, it appears that educational attainment was marginally higher than the overall average while the employment ratio and income were marginally lower (Armstrong, 2001).

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When Teenage Girls Have Children

Trends and Consequences

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Whether to have a child or not is essentially a personal choice. But when a teenage girl becomes a mother, the consequences are felt not only by the mother and her child, but also by her family, her community and, ultimately, society at large.

In Canada, fertility of First Nations women of all ages, though still almost double that of other Canadian women, has been declining since the 1960s. Nation-wide, the fertility rate among First Nations women fell from 6.1 to 2.7 children per woman. This general decline in fertility, made possible by the increased availability of contraceptive methods, is the expression of these women's desire to have fewer offspring. Upon review of the birth data contained in the Indian Register, however, a completely different trend comes to light for First Nations teenage girls.¹

Fertility of Young First Nations Women Since 1986

Contrary to what statistics for First Nations women of all ages indicate, fertility of First Nations teenage girls (under 20) has remained high since 1986 at about 100 births per 1,000 women (Figure 1). An analysis of aggregate fertility indicators, therefore, masks the situation peculiar to teenage girls. In fact, fertility of First Nations teenage girls is seven times higher than that of other Canadian teenagers. For First Nations teenage girls under 15 years of age, the rate is estimated to be as much as 18 times higher than that of other Canadians (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, 2003).

The fertility rate among young First Nations women is highest in the Prairie provinces. In Manitoba for

example, one teenage First Nations woman in eight had a child in 2004 (128 births per 1,000 women between 15 and 19 years of age).

International Comparisons

The magnitude of early motherhood among First Nations teenage girls in Canada becomes obvious when compared to the situation observed in other countries. Fertility of First Nations teenage girls in Canada is twice as high as that of American teenagers, who have the highest teen fertility of all industrialized nations.² In the United States, the US Congress, federal and state governments, and even private entities such as the *National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy*³ have developed and implemented strategies to reduce fertility among teenage girls. The approach taken for developing and implementing these strategies rests on a common and documented understanding of the issue of early motherhood (US General Accounting Office, 1998).

According to international demographic statistics collected by the United Nations (Population Diversity, 2006) (Table 1), First Nations teenage girls in Canada have a fertility level comparable to that of teenage girls in least developed countries such as Nepal, Ethiopia and Somalia. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) invests in national programs designed to meet the needs of teenagers and youth in the areas of health, education, and the economy. The UNFPA's action aims at preventing unintended pregnancies and reducing sexually transmitted infections.⁴ At the moment, in Canada, efforts to reduce fertility of First Nations teenagers are, at best, low-profile.

FIGURE 1

Fertility Rate of Registered Indian Women and All Canadian Women Between 15 and 19 Years of Age, Canada, 1986-2004

**TABLE 1**

International Comparisons of Fertility Rate Per 1,000 Women Between 15 and 19 Years of Age

Region, Country	Rate
Registered Indian	95
Canada	14
Africa	122
Asia	53
Europe	24
Latin America	86
North America	50
Oceania	40
Most developed countries	29
Developing countries	71
Least developed countries	136
Nepal	127
Ethiopia	111
Occupied Palestinian Territory	106
India	96
Somalia	75
Haiti	70
United States	41

Consequences of Early Motherhood

Generally speaking, early motherhood increases the vulnerability of a young First Nation woman who is already disadvantaged socio-economically by reason of her cultural background and gender. She is also at greater risk of academic under-achievement, reduced employability, an elevated risk of single parenthood and an increased dependence on income assistance. The combined effect of early motherhood and cultural background is glaring in terms of educational attainment. According to the 2001 Census of Canada, First Nations women aged 25 to 29 who had a child in their teens are twice as likely (20%) not to have completed Grade 9 than other First Nations mothers (10%) and other Canadian teenage mothers (8%).

From the moment of their birth, the future of children of First Nations teenage mothers is often compromised. American statistics on early motherhood indicate that teenage mothers are at greater risk of not receiving proper prenatal care (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, 2003),⁵ with the result that, at birth, the frequency of insufficient weight (Health Canada, 2005) and fetal alcohol syndrome (Eni et al., 2007; SSCAP, 2003) is higher among children of teenage mothers. The children of teenage mothers are also more at risk of neglect and abuse, and therefore at greater risk of being uprooted from their families and placed in the custody of social services.

Owing to the economic situation of teenage mothers (Grindstaff, 1990), their children grow up in conditions of poverty more often than children of older women. In 2001, 80% of First

Nations teenage mothers live in a family with a total income of less than \$15,000 per year, compared to 27% of First Nations mothers aged 20 years or older (Statistics Canada, 2001).

Economic insecurity is just one aspect of these children's "ill-being." It is a recognized fact that teenage mothers are often unable to provide their children with a healthy environment conducive to their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development (SSCAP, 2003).

Easy to be Judgmental

From the perspective of non-Aboriginal society, there is a strong temptation to interpret the choice of First Nations teenage girls to have a child as a bad one. For this largely urban society, a value judgment of this kind implies that other preferable lifestyle choices are available. Such *other lifestyle choices* would imply a more or less typical sequence of events:

1. at the very least, successfully completing high school, preferably post-secondary studies;
2. finding stable and gainful employment;
3. leaving the family home; and
4. as the case may be, starting a family.

For many young First Nations boys and girls living in communities virtually cut off from the rest of Canadian society, the reality is that education, employment and housing are deficient, sometimes outright lacking (Cooke et al., 2004; O'Sullivan et al., 2004). These *other lifestyle choices* are close to non-existent. So, can one reasonably speak of *bad* choices when these young people have children? Debating the issue of

early motherhood without taking into consideration the living conditions of First Nations families and communities is overly simplistic and revealing of an ethnocentric vision of the world.

From a First Nations perspective, children and family have a special importance in traditional culture. There is a strong temptation to use culture as an explanation, not to say justification, for early motherhood among First Nations teenage girls: they have children early because that's the way it is in traditional First Nations culture. Given the consequences of early motherhood, however, the very idea of a teenage mother not being able to provide her child with a healthy environment conducive to physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development is diametrically opposed to the spirit of traditional culture, which places the child at the centre of family and community life. Debating the relevance of early motherhood solely from the perspective of culture is also simplistic and indicative of a certain fatalism.

Regardless of the way in which early motherhood is judged or justified, the negative consequences for children in many families in First Nations communities are irrefutable. More often than not, early motherhood strengthens and contributes to dependence, from generation to generation.

Final Thoughts

At a time when the low fertility in Canadian families no longer ensures the replacement of generations, the high fertility of First Nations families is a true richness. Disregarding early motherhood and its intergenerational

consequences, however, certainly does not serve to leverage this richness since it contributes to perpetuating the dependence of First Nations families and communities.

Let's be clear: Early motherhood in a healthy environment is what is at issue, not motherhood in itself, nor its level. Reflection and future actions must not focus on the number of children in First Nations families, but rather on the timing and the conditions into which they are born. Finally, the fertility rate of teenagers in the most developed countries, that is, 29 children per 1,000 women, is not a "standard." Societies that are organized differently and healthily for families could have more children born from young mothers. Even under excellent conditions, though, there is every reason to believe that teenage girls in those societies would post much lower fertility rates than First Nations teenage girls in Canada.

Notes

- 1 For more details on the source of data and the methodology, see N. Robitaille, A. Kouaouci and E. Guimond (2004). "La fécondité des Indiennes à 15-19 ans, de 1986 à 1997" in J.P. White, P. Maxim and D. Beavon (dir.), *Aboriginal Policy Research – Setting the Agenda for Change*, Thompson Educational Publishing Inc., Toronto.
- 2 <<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/teen/overview/overview.htm>>
- 3 <<http://www.teenpregnancy.org/>>
- 4 <<http://www.unfpa.org/french/about/index.htm>>
- 5 <<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/teen/overview/overview.htm>>

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Policies and Practice Reforms to Promote Positive Transitions to Fatherhood among Aboriginal Young Men¹

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For many Aboriginal children and youth in Canada, having a father who is positively involved in their family life is only a dim idea that doesn't apply to them. According to Statistics Canada (2001), more than half of Aboriginal children growing up off-reserve live in single-mother-headed households. Many of these children have no contact with their fathers. The negative consequences of this phenomenon are considerable. More hopefully though, stories told by Aboriginal fathers in the first study of Aboriginal fatherhood in Canada suggest there is the potential for a new generation of positively involved Aboriginal fathers that urgently needs to be recognized and supported through program and policy reforms.

Why is Father Involvement Important?

Research has demonstrated the importance of positive involvement by fathers in their children's lives. Not only does fathering affect future fathering in a multi-generational pattern (Cowan and Cowan, 1987), but the degree and quality of father involvement show significant correlates with children's health outcomes (e.g., Ball and Moselle, 2007; Russek and Schwartz, 1997), developmental outcomes (e.g., Howard, Lefebvre, Borkowski, and Whitman, 2006; Marsiglio, Day, and Lamb, 2000), and vulnerability to suicide (Brent, Perper, Moritz, and Liotus, 1995; Rubenstein, Halton, Kasten, Rubin, and Stechler, 1998). Father involvement protects children from engaging in delinquent behaviours (Zimmerman, Salem, and Notaro, 2000). Father absence in families which started out with

a mother and father (compared to a planned same-sex parenting composition) has been linked to sub-optimal outcomes for children, ranging from higher risk of injury, asthma (Harknett, 2005), obesity (Strauss and Knight, 1999) and other health problems (Horn and Sylvester, 2002), speech-language pathology (Dawson, 1991), early school leaving (Painter and Levine, 2000), and weak labour force attachment (McLanahan and Sandefeur, 1994). Young fathers are less likely to be living with their children if their own fathers did not live with them during childhood (Furstenberg and Weiss, 2001). In the United States, the US Bureau of the Census (2003) reports that children in father-absent homes are five times more likely to be poor. According to Statistics Canada (2001), 35 percent of Aboriginal children living on-reserve and 50 percent of Aboriginal children living in urban centres live with one parent, usually their mother. In addition, Aboriginal children are grossly over-represented in the child welfare system.

The Findings: Disrupted Transmission of Fathering

A recently completed study opened up a new area of inquiry in Canada: the journeys of Aboriginal men becoming fathers (Ball, in press). Conducted under a community-university partnership and informed by indigenous research ethics, the study involved First Nations fathers on the research team and gathered stories of fatherhood from 73 First Nations and 7 Métis fathers. Among the 80 fathers, 36 lived on-reserve and 44 off-reserve. The number of children

they identified as “theirs” ranged from 1 to 11, with a mean of 3 children, though some fathers were not involved as caregivers or co-resident with their children. All of the fathers had at least one child under seven years of age. More than half (44) of the fathers who volunteered for this study lived with a partner. Nearly one third had either a high school diploma or some post-secondary education, which is a higher level of education than found by Statistics Canada (2001) for Aboriginal men aged 15 to 65 years. Fathers who participated were asked how best to share and mobilize knowledge gained in the study: in addition to community newsletters and journal articles, they overwhelmingly called for a video documentary and guide booklets where fathers could share their stories “in our own words.” Consequently, six First Nations fathers participated in the production of a documentary on fatherhood (Ball and Asterisk Productions, 2007), and a range of print and online resources have been produced.

The study’s findings illuminate the conditions associated with colonialism that have shaped fathers’ self-reported challenges in “facing up to fatherhood,” “learning to be a father,” and “becoming a man.” Nearly all fathers recounted negative experiences with their own fathers, or missing out on having a father altogether, which left them with little personal experience in positive fathering to draw upon when they became fathers themselves. The vast majority reported problems with substance abuse, psychological distress, and difficulties sustaining

relationships with partners and relatives, preventing them from being as involved with their children as they would like. Fathers who were successfully involved with their children traced a personal journey of healing and coming to terms with their negative experiences in residential school or as secondary survivors of residential

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school effects. They saw healing as a first step on their journey to becoming involved fathers.

Fathers described a gradual process of accepting and learning to be fathers, often years after the birth of their first child. Most fathers had complex families involving children from many different relationships. Many fathers described a vacuum of support from formal institutions, such as primary health clinics and schools, dominated by mother-centrism. Promisingly, the Aboriginal women’s movement is focusing some attention on men’s roles, helping to create an environment that is conducive to social change among Aboriginal men. Fathers who were involved with their children often credited their partner’s receptivity, patience and guidance in helping them to learn how to care for children. Shifting constructions of masculinity in some Aboriginal communities were also identified by some fathers as a factor that had enabled them to assume caregiving roles with their children. The desire among many Aboriginal peoples to

bring traditional teachings forward into contemporary life is helping to focus attention on men’s roles, including those surrounding child raising.

Some fathers reflected on the healing movement in Canada as a positive social force within their communities

that is helping to foster a renewed understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and joys of parenting, including fatherhood. Other fathers expressed grave concern about the future for Aboriginal fatherhood. They reflected on the high rate of birth of Aboriginal children but the relatively low rate of Aboriginal children who are co-resident with their fathers. They pointed to the high rate of substance abuse, suicide, incarceration, and poverty among young Aboriginal men. Through stories from their own lives and those of other men in their communities, they described how being raised without sustained, positive contact with a father compounds the socio-historical, economic, and emotional challenges for the next generation of young men who will face the birth of a child.

The Findings in Context: The Legacy of Residential Schools, *The Indian Act*

The role of Canadian legislation and policy in contributing to social

FIGURE 1
Correlates of Disrupted Fatherhood Affecting Aboriginal Youth



FIGURE 2
Strategies to Revitalize Positive Involvement of Aboriginal Young Men in Fathering



exclusion of Aboriginal individuals and groups has been extensively documented (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Salée, 2006). Aboriginal fathers have suffered tremendous losses in terms of their role in family life, with deleterious effects on the health and wellness of their children as well as themselves (See Figure 1). Restricting traditional subsistence activities and the forced relocation from ancestral territories diminished the capacity of many men to fulfill their traditional role of providing for family members and passing on knowledge of how to live on the land (Chrisjohn and Young, 1997). Prohibition of ceremonial and sacred rites stemmed the flow of cultural knowledge and spiritual beliefs from fathers to children. Policies encouraging placement of children in residential schools (Fournier and Crey, 1997; Miller, 1996), and later in non-Aboriginal foster and adoptive homes (First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, 2005), have disrupted traditional adult-child relationships for generations of Aboriginal people.

The devastating impacts of these policies are painfully evident in many Aboriginal men today. Sequelae include emotional abandonment, loss of cultural identity and personal pride, substance abuse, and physical and mental health problems (Mussell, 2005). Many men have difficulty sustaining intimate relationships, meeting family obligations, and connecting with their children (Smolewski and Wesley-Esquiaux, 2003). Census data confirm that, as a group, self-identified Aboriginal

males between 15 and 65 years of age have higher rates of unemployment, poverty, mobility, being unmarried, not completing high school, incarceration and homelessness than do non-Aboriginal males (Statistics Canada, 2001). One in five incarcerated men in Canada is Aboriginal (Statistics Canada, 2005). Young Aboriginal men die at a higher rate than the rest of the Canadian population as a result of suicide or unintentional injury (Health Canada, 2005). These factors contribute to the challenges of connecting with and caring for children.

These negative impacts are felt by subsequent generations. Poor living conditions, high mobility, extensive health problems, and negative social stigma exacerbate the challenges of developing positive father-child connections, as has been shown in research involving non-Aboriginal fathers (Roopnarine, Brown, Snell-White and Riegraf, 1995). In the recently completed study, many Aboriginal fathers reported feeling they have nothing positive to offer their children (Ball, in press); many suffered such low self-esteem that they did not think they were “worthy” of a relationship with their child.

Opportunities for Positive Action

Despite considerable challenges, the study found that many Aboriginal men have successfully assumed positive, caregiving roles with their children, including some who are lone parents to children whose mothers are absent. Fathers who were positively involved with their children

described the rewards of fathering, but also the personal challenges and social barriers that an Aboriginal young man must overcome in order to connect with and care for their children. These findings point to ways to help Aboriginal young men avoid or address these challenges (See Figure 2).

Fathers who were positively involved with their children described the rewards of fathering, but also the personal challenges and social barriers that an Aboriginal young man must overcome in order to connect with and care for their children.

Changing media images of Aboriginal fathers. Images of Aboriginal young men as subsisting on the edges of society and chronically in trouble at school and with the law are prevalent in Canadian media. These images promulgate negative social expectations for Aboriginal boys as they begin to imagine possibilities for themselves in the future as fathers. In order to inspire Aboriginal youth to construct positive expectations for themselves in caring relationships as adults, there is a need for images in media that show Aboriginal men assuming the role of positively involved father, including fathers who take on primary caregiving roles after a mother's departure for the day (stay-at-home dads) or for good (lone fathers). For example, a Health Canada video by and for Aboriginal youth features popular Aboriginal musician and actor George Leach talking about his experience of becoming a responsible young father (Health Canada, 1997).

Moving beyond mother-centred policies and programs. The idea that promoting fathers' involvement can contribute to the health and development of all family members has not yet taken hold in health policy discourse (Ball and Moselle, 2007). The focus remains almost exclusively on the roles and needs of

mothers, while well-baby clinics, child care and family support programs all communicate the belief that mothers are the critical link to child health and development — an approach that exacerbates young men's sense of worthlessness. Further, many agencies privilege the identity of mothers over fathers on child records. More information for expectant fathers and more effort on the part of health personnel is needed to a secure father's paternity designation on Aboriginal children's birth records — a first step in securing a young father's identification with fatherhood and involvement with his baby.

Programs targeting Aboriginal youth and families need to evaluate their effectiveness in welcoming the participation of Aboriginal fathers, and ensure their relevance to Aboriginal youth who are preparing for or learning fatherhood. Programs need to offer:

- male and Aboriginal staff;

- materials about a father's role in addition to maternal child care;
- activities that will interest both men and women; and
- policies that require accountability to fathers as well as mothers with critical incidents involving their child (Ball and Roberge, 2007).

Supporting healthy lifestyles and healing.

In the study of Aboriginal fathers, a resounding theme was that the men needed time and support in order to “learn fatherhood,” to accept their role and begin to assume the responsibilities that fatherhood entails. The first step, many fathers said, is to recognize and deal with personal challenges, especially substance abuse, anger management and other communication difficulties, and ineffective relationship skills. Accordingly, programs need to support healthy lifestyles, to address mental health and addiction issues, and to help expectant and new fathers develop the skills needed to form and sustain healthy family environments.

Sustaining connections as circumstances change. Aboriginal fathers often have difficulty sustaining connections with children over time. They may move for work or education. Some are unable to sustain relationships because of substance abuse, incarceration, or homelessness. As well, many fathers are overlooked when agencies intervene in situations involving separation and divorce, child protection, foster placement

and adoption (Gough, Blackstock, Bala, 2005). More effort needs to be made to identify, locate, and involve fathers of children who receive social services or are taken into state care.

To strengthen father-child connections, funding is needed for father-child programs, and for activity programs targeting Aboriginal fathers and their children. Reforms are also needed to increase the transparency of laws and accessibility of legal aid for fathers implicated by decisions about child custody, visitation, and guardianship.

Looking Forward

Having positive expectations, listening to youth, and reaching out with positive role models and meaningful kinds of support will help young Aboriginal fathers to commit to becoming positively involved in their children's lives. The study reported here is a first step, demonstrating that many Aboriginal men are eager to be involved in research and to participate in sharing their stories of fatherhood. A larger program of research could contribute understanding different determinants of fathering, including varying family configurations, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and fathers' connections with their cultural community and traditional territory. For incarcerated Aboriginal men, research could inform the development of programs for fathers to initiate, sustain or re-build connections with their children. Research could illuminate the mediating

impacts of positive fathers' involvement on children's health and development within varying family structures, including the prevalent patterns of non-co-resident and never-married Aboriginal parents, actively involved extended family members, and lone Aboriginal fathering. Research could help to discern whether there is a new generation of Aboriginal fathers embodying traditional values of father's involvement in providing and caring for children, and how they are negotiating a successful transition to positive fatherhood.

Note

- 1 This article draws upon the findings of a research study conducted by the author as part of the Fathers Involvement Research Alliance, and funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Community-University Research Alliances program (File No. 833-2003-1002) as well as by the British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development through the Human Early Learning Partnership. The views presented here are those of the author and do not represent the views of provincial or federal funding agencies, the FIRA group as a whole, or Aboriginal organizations.

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Lead Your Way!

The National Aboriginal Role Model Program encourages Aboriginal youth to reach their goals and lead healthy lifestyles

The National Aboriginal Role Model Program (NARMP) is a unique program organized by the National Aboriginal Health Organization. The program celebrates the leadership, innovation and accomplishments of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth aged 13 to 30. "Lead Your Way!", the program's slogan, inspires Aboriginal youth to strive to reach their goals.

NARMP aims to promote healthy lifestyles and self-esteem among Aboriginal people, to strengthen Aboriginal identity, and to create positive public images of Aboriginal people.

In October 2006, 12 Aboriginal youth from across Canada were inducted into the program during a ceremony at Rideau Hall. The ceremony was presided over by Her Excellency, The

Jodie-Lynn Waddilove

31 years old from Munsee-Delaware Nation, Ontario
Fields of interest: Lawyer – civil litigation and corporate commercial law
2005-06 Role Model



My parents were the largest contributors to my success. I was born and raised on a small First Nation in southern Ontario. I did not know any lawyers or legal professionals growing up and my parents did not have post-secondary education. What my parents did have, however, was a strong commitment to their children. They raised us to be proud of our identity and culture, to possess a strong work ethic, to pursue our education, and to defy the stereotypes facing

Aboriginal people, especially those of First Nations persons on-reserve. The pride and the values they instilled in me fuelled me to succeed by defying the odds and becoming a lawyer by the age of 26. As a lawyer in the Canadian justice system, I know that many more of our children can achieve what I have achieved if they have similar support and encouragement.

My biggest hope for young Aboriginal people across Canada is that they know and believe that they can succeed. The most important part of this is that they succeed while taking pride in who they are and while practicing their culture and traditions. Speaking from experience, there are many obstacles they will have to confront, including negativity, racism, sexism and stereotypes. But they can defy these things and persevere. There are many successful Aboriginal people who have accomplished great things and there are many more who will follow in their footsteps.

Jessica Dunkley

28 years old, Métis

Fields of interest: Second year medical student at
University of Ottawa
2007-08 Role Model



I grew up learning very little about my culture. I am deaf. I could not understand my grandfather's stories about his life on the land in Manitoba. But when I met James Makokis, who eventually became the National Spokesperson for the National Aboriginal Role Model Program, my understanding of the people and the dynamics of our culture grew. My knowledge became enriched with James' sincere dedication to his language, his people and his traditions.

His stories of his culture and family inspired me to rediscover the identity that I had all but lost before I met him.

There is a lot more hope today for Indigenous youth who feel they're at a disadvantage. For those who have disabilities, there are opportunities and possibilities for them to achieve their passion. I hope that by leading through example, I will be able to instill some confidence in our youth that anything in life is possible. We need to remove the illusion or stigma that is imposed on Indigenous people with disabilities. We need to show everyone what we can do. And the same goes for all Aboriginal youth. They have the power to achieve their dreams.

Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, who awarded each of the role models with an award in the form of a small crystal sculpture.

"All of you being honoured today give hope to so many people, both in your local communities and in the broader community of Canada," the Governor General said in a speech at

the ceremony. "Through the choices you have made, and through your hard work every day, you clearly demonstrate to members of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities that it is possible to succeed in Canada, while also remaining true to your own cultural traditions, which are the most ancient on this continent."

Among the inductees to this year's program were several scholars, star athletes and young volunteers, as well as an aspiring pilot, an amateur actress, jingle dress dancers, a science whiz, a medical student, a young Métis leader, an RCMP constable, and an auxiliary member of the RCMP.

Throughout the year, the chosen candidates will be available as motivational speakers, travelling to communities, conferences, events, and school functions across Canada to share their stories with other Aboriginal youth. Posters and trading cards featuring the leaders, are produced and distributed to Aboriginal communities, schools, and friendship centres.

NARMP has recognized a total of 36 Aboriginal youth since NAHO began co-ordinating the program four years ago. For many of the program's past participants, being a role model was a life-altering experience.

"The National Aboriginal Role Model Program changed my life," said Thomas Edwards, a 2004-2005 role model. "Not only was I given the chance to meet youth and share my story, but they inspired me when they shared their stories and made me proud to be a First Nation youth."

A new roster of Aboriginal youth were announced on National Aboriginal Day: June 21, 2007. The 2007-2008 role models are: Suzette Amaya from Gwa'Sala-Nakwaxda'xw Nation, British Columbia; Julie Bull from Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador; Carissa Copenace

Thomas Edwards

25 years old from Ojibway, Lake Manitoba First Nation

Fields of interest: Education & Theatre

2004-05 Role Model



My students and the youth that I have worked with – both from Winnipeg and from Lake Manitoba First Nation – have contributed to my success. I also have a lot of role models in my family that I look up to in order to stay strong and be successful; people like my Aunty Joyce, Uncle Peter, and my Godparents, Paulette and Jacques Dupont, encourage me, as do organizations like the Festival du Voyageur, who have accepted me into their family. With-

out these people and support groups in my life, I wouldn't have gotten as far as I did.

I see Aboriginal youth having more of a voice in all aspects of Canadian life. As long as we keep showing them the right road and continue to support them, they will only grow stronger. They need to know that they can be as successful as anyone else. Aboriginal youth today have such a strong voice and I see it only growing stronger as they mature.

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from Rainy River First Nation, Ontario; Jessica Dunkley from Vancouver, British Columbia; Jordan Fleury from Brandon, Manitoba; Gloria Kowtak from Whale Cove, Nunavut; Shawn Kuliktana from Kugluktuk, Nunavut; Candice Lys from Fort Smith, Northwest Territories; Anna Nelson from Roseau River Anishinaabe First Nation, Manitoba; Alwyn Piche from La Loche, Saskatchewan; Charlie Tookaluk from Umiujaq, Quebec; and Vanessa Webb from Nain, Newfoundland and Labrador.

A new National Spokesperson was chosen this year to be the ambassador of the role model program. James Makokis is Cree from the Saddle Lake Cree Nation in Alberta. Currently studying medicine at the University of Ottawa, Makokis has a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Food Science from the University of Alberta and a Masters of Health Science in Community Nutrition from the University of Toronto. In March 2007, Makokis received the Youth Award from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation.

Voices of Aboriginal Youth Today Keeping Aboriginal Languages Alive for Future Generations

Mary Jane Norris

Senior Research Manager
Research and Analysis Directorate
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

History was made in Calgary, Alberta on February 3, 2007, when a 13-year-old First Nation girl became the first person to sing “O Canada” in Cree at a National Hockey League game.¹ This exciting occasion comes at a time when Aboriginal children and youth in Canada – at home or in school – are making concerted efforts to learn and speak their traditional languages, and contributing to a growing awareness about Canada’s indigenous languages. As this paper argues, these are positive developments that ought to be encouraged, even as Aboriginal languages in Canada continue to face enormous challenges.

Context: Intergenerational Transmission of Aboriginal Languages in Decline

Historically, Aboriginal youth faced considerable barriers in using their languages throughout society in general, but particularly through the prohibition of Aboriginal languages in residential schools.² While today’s Aboriginal youth may not face the same obstacles as their predecessors, the impacts of those past policies remain, and combine with significant new barriers and challenges in the revitalization and maintenance of traditional languages.

More than previous generations, Aboriginal youth today contend with the prevailing influence of English and French in the media, popular culture, and the market place. Further, demographic and geographic factors can erode the intergenerational transmission of Aboriginal languages: just

over 10 percent of Aboriginal children and youth today live in “ideal” conditions for acquiring an Aboriginal mother tongue, that is, living within Aboriginal communities in families where both parents have an Aboriginal mother tongue (Norris, 2007).

Indications are that the intergenerational transmission of Aboriginal languages is in decline among younger generations: analysis of 2001 Census data shows that among people aged 65 and over who identified themselves as Aboriginal, 44 percent reported the ability to speak an Aboriginal language, and 40 percent have an Aboriginal mother tongue. In contrast, only 20 percent of Aboriginal children and youth under the age of 25 were able to speak an Aboriginal language, while just 16 percent had an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue.

Children remain the major source of growth for the Aboriginal mother tongue population in Canada. However, census data show that mother tongue population growth is eroding, notwithstanding relatively high levels of Aboriginal fertility. The ever-diminishing use of Aboriginal languages as “major home languages” reduces the chances of younger people acquiring their traditional language as a mother tongue. For the first time since 1981, the mother tongue population fell, from 208,600 in 1996 to 203,900 in 2001. The proportion of children (aged 0-19) in the Aboriginal mother tongue population fell from 41 percent in 1986 to just 32 percent in 2001 (Norris, 2003; See Figure 1).³ From 1981 to 2001, the prospects of

transmitting a language as a mother tongue, as measured by the index of continuity, declined from 76 persons speaking the language at home for every 100 persons who speak it as their mother tongue, to just 61 persons (See Figure 2).⁴

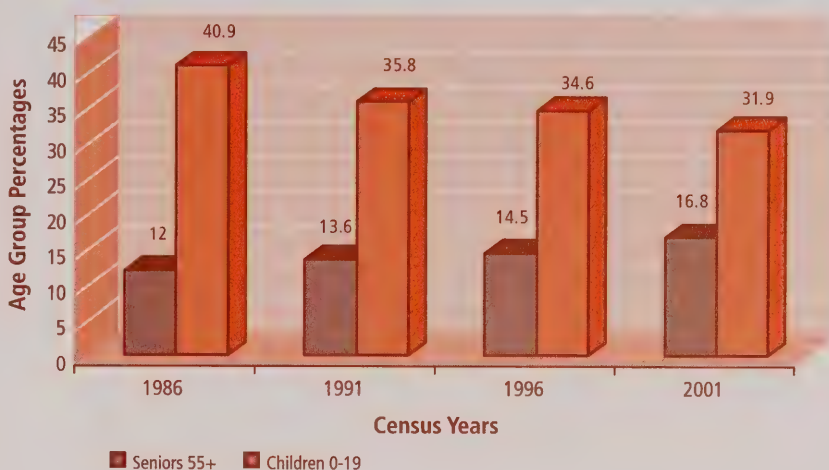
The decline in mother tongue transmission is informed significantly by numerous factors. First and foremost among these factors is home use. Of the 58,000 children (aged 5 to 14 in 1996) with a parent with an Aboriginal mother tongue, over 90 percent had the ability (knowledge) to conduct a conversation in the Aboriginal language of a parent; however, only 47 percent had the parent's Aboriginal mother tongue, while an even smaller share (38%) spoke their Aboriginal language at home.

Aboriginal mother tongue continuity is also linked to the life cycle, and in particular to transitions from youth to adulthood. A cohort analysis of census data showed that the most pronounced decline in home use of Aboriginal languages occurred among female youth from the ages of 20 to 24 in 1981 to ages 35 to 39 in 1996. This is significant given these are the years during which women leave home, enter the labour force, marry, bring up young children, or move to a larger urban environment (Norris, 1998).

Diminished language continuity is particularly associated with linguistic out-marriage (exogamy). Figure 3 illustrates the strong inverse linear association between language continuity and exogamy. Viable languages with extremely high language continuity

FIGURE 1

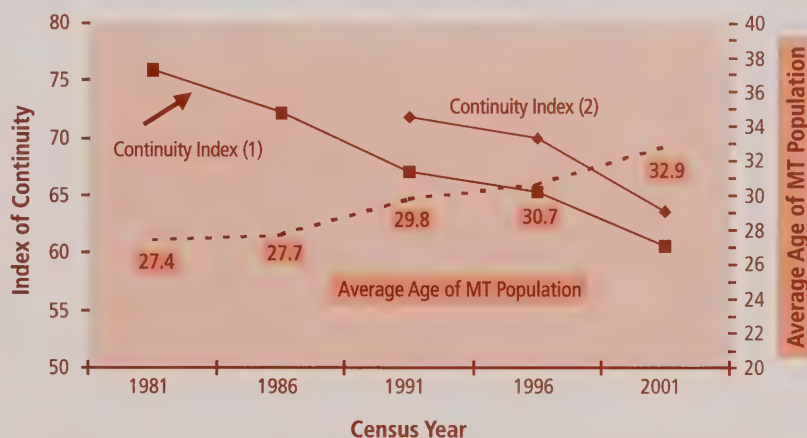
Age Composition of Mother Tongue Population: Children and Seniors as Percentage of Total Population with an Aboriginal Mother Tongue, 1986 to 2001



Source: 1986-2001 Censuses, Norris (2003).

FIGURE 2

Aboriginal Languages: Index of Continuity and Average Age of Mother Tongue Population, Canada, 1981 to 2001



Notes:

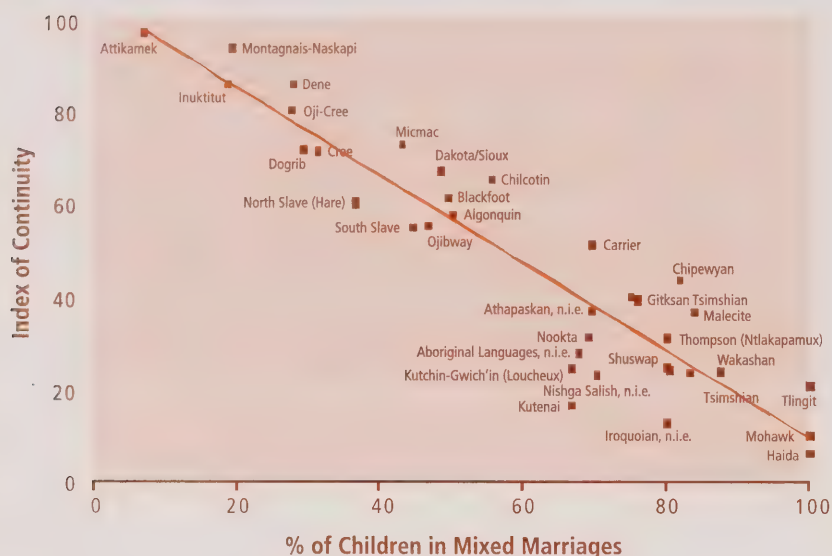
(1) Based on single responses to language (MT, HL) questions.

(2) Based on single and multiple responses.

Source: 1981-2001 Censuses, Norris (2003).

FIGURE 3

Aboriginal Language Continuity and Percentage of Children in Exogamous Marriages, by Aboriginal Language of Parent(s), Canada, 1996



Source: 1996 Census, Norris and MacCon (2003).

Note: Since this is a Census-based article, we have chosen to use Census-based terminology and style in the naming of the languages.

(80% plus), such as Attikamek, Montagnais-Naskapi, and Inuktitut, are characterized by low exogamy rates (less than 20%); while endangered languages, such as Haida, Tlingit, and Kutenai, display extremely low continuity levels of 20 percent or less and extremely high exogamy rates (averaging 90%). The largest First Nation language, Cree, has continuity and exogamy rates of about 70 and 30 percent respectively (Norris, 2003).

Outcomes are also associated with location: among linguistically endogamous families, proportions of children that have an Aboriginal mother tongue are highest on reserves (68%) and other rural communities (77%),

but drop to just 41 percent in large cities (Norris, 2003).

Finally, differences in the outcomes of Aboriginal youth mirror the diversity and viability of the different languages, which vary significantly in their states, trends, and outlook.⁵ Figure 4 illustrates the strong inverse linear association between language continuity and average age of the mother tongue population. Viable languages like Attikamek, Inuktitut, and Dene are characterized by relatively young mother tongue populations and high continuity, while endangered languages like Haida, Kutenai, and Tlingit typically have older mother tongue populations combined with very low continuity

indexes, patterns that persisted from the 1996 Census to 2001 Census (Norris, 2003, 2007).

Overall, trends indicate that many Aboriginal languages – even larger ones – will be confronted with declining mother tongue continuity in future generations. In 2001, just 13 percent of the Aboriginal population reported using an Aboriginal language “most often” in the home, and five percent on a “regular” basis (Norris and Jantzen, 2003). In the case of already-endangered languages, extinction could be only a generation away, without revitalization efforts, while languages currently considered viable may experience growing problems of continuity among younger generations.

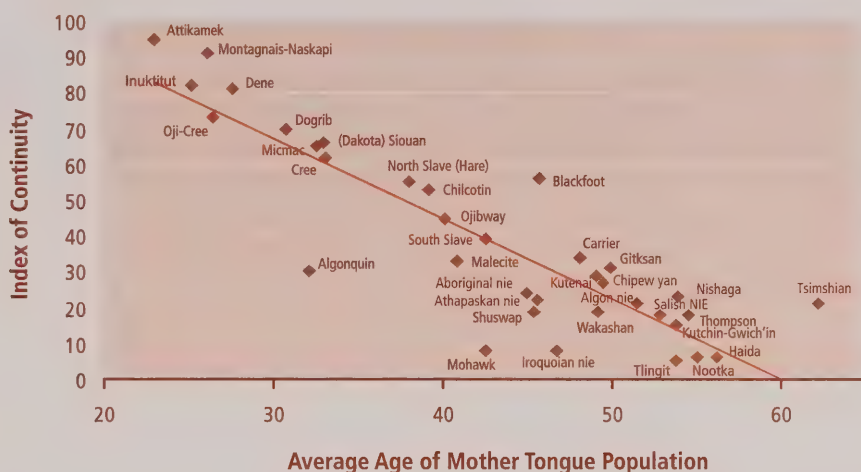
Second-Language Acquisition: Counterbalance to Mother Tongue Decline

Aboriginal youth are considerably less likely than their elders to speak an Aboriginal language and, among those who do, it appears that the likelihood of acquiring their language as a second language is increasing (Norris, 2003, 2007). Figure 5 shows that while Aboriginal children and youth under age 25 represent 38 percent of Aboriginal mother tongue speakers, they make up a larger share of second-language speakers, about 45 percent. This is in contrast to the distribution of mother tongue and second language speakers among those aged 45 years and older (Figure 5) (Norris, 2007). The index of second-language acquisition⁶ indicates that for every 100 Aboriginal youths in Canada who have an Aboriginal mother tongue,

there are more – 121 – who can speak an Aboriginal language, implying that some youth must have learned their language as a second language, which is higher than the corresponding index of 107 for speakers of age 65 years or more. Among all Aboriginal language speakers, the second-language index rose from 117 in 1996 to 120 in 2001.

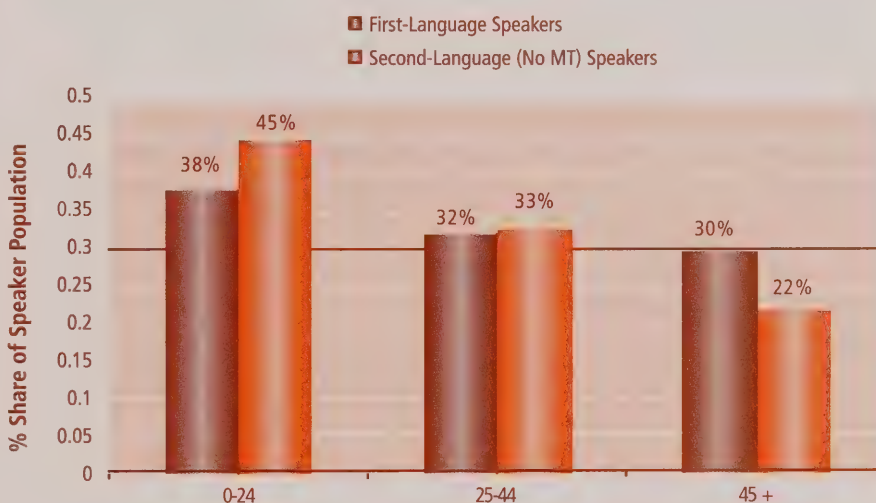
Second-language acquisition is increasingly important at the community level as well, particularly as mother tongue populations age out of the childbearing years. Between 1996 and 2001 the proportion of comparable communities where most Aboriginal speakers had learned the language as their mother tongue dropped from two thirds to less than half, whereas the proportion of communities where most speakers had acquired it as their second language doubled from 8.5 to 17 percent. Fully one third of communities enumerated in 2001 could be classified as being in transition from a mother tongue population to a second-language population (Norris, 2006). The impact of second-language acquisition is most pronounced outside Aboriginal communities/settlements and in urban areas: 165 off-reserve Registered Indian children aged 10 to 14 are able to speak a First Nation language for every 100 children with a First Nation mother tongue, compared to a corresponding index of only 115 on reserves, suggesting that young people living outside Aboriginal communities are significantly more likely to acquire their traditional language as a second language compared to those on reserves (Norris and Jantzen, 2002).

FIGURE 4
Index of Language Continuity by Average Age of Mother Tongue Population, Canada, 2001



Source: 2001 Census, author's calculations.

FIGURE 5
Distribution of First and Second Language Speakers by Age Groups, Canada, 2001



Source: 2001 Census, Norris (2007) (CST).

Growth of second-language acquisition is important to the long-term viability of languages, given the observed declines in mother tongue populations. The Tlingit language family, for example, has one of the oldest mother tongue populations, averaging close to 54 years, but the index of second-language acquisition

are aging beyond childbearing, and for most children the ideal family and community conditions for mother tongue transmission are becoming more the exception than the norm. Figure 6 shows how young second-language speakers make up an increasingly important segment of the populations of endangered languages.

become responsible for the survival of their languages, cultures, and traditions and, ultimately, the identity of their descendants.

There are encouraging signs from the rise in second-language acquisition, particularly where it appears the speaker population may be growing due to an influx of youth. That suggests a strong desire among young people to learn their traditional languages, accompanied by support and opportunities for learning. These implications are consistent with findings of the 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) which showed that speaking an Aboriginal language is important to Aboriginal people of all ages, including youth, parents, and adults both within and outside Aboriginal communities. While APS results reinforce the importance of parents and home use of languages, they also point to other important sources of learning for children including their extended family of aunts, uncles, grandparents, and other persons, teachers in schools, and the community itself (Norris, 2004). Even in the case of relatively strong languages like Inuktitut, for example, Inuit youth who say they do not want to lose their ability to speak

The process of learning an Aboriginal language may also contribute to increased self-esteem of youth and community well-being, as well as cultural continuity.

is 219, and the average age of all speakers is 41 years, suggesting that younger generations are more likely to learn Tlingit as a second language (Table 1).

Among some endangered languages, there appears to be a strong tendency among parents to ensure that their children have at least some knowledge of their ancestral language, even if transmission as a mother tongue is weak (Norris and MacCon, 2003). Demographically, second-language transmission is increasingly a necessary response for endangered languages, reflecting two phenomena: many mother tongue populations

From 1996 to 2001, the smaller Salish languages experienced a five percent drop in mother tongue population while simultaneously posting an impressive 17 percent increase in the total number of speakers (Norris, 2007).

Outlook: Youth Keeping Aboriginal Languages Alive for Generations to Come

The language outcomes of today's Aboriginal youth have significant implications for the future prospects of Canada's Aboriginal languages, particularly endangered languages. As future parents, today's youth will

Table 1 (on the following page)

Notes:

1. The indicators – index of continuity, index of ability, and average age of mother tongue and home language – are based on single and multiple responses (of mother tongue and home language) combined.
2. The viability “status” of the individual languages is based on a classification from M. Dale Kinkade’s “The Decline of Native Languages in Canada” in *Endangered Languages* (1991).
3. Four reserves in Manitoba had changes in reporting patterns for Cree, Oji-Cree, and Ojibway between 1996 and 2001.
4. Due to changes in coding procedures between 1996 and 2001, North and South Slave are not directly comparable between the two censuses.
5. Data for the Iroquoian family are not particularly representative due to the significant impact of incomplete enumeration of reserves for this language family. Other languages, such as those in the Algonquian family, may be affected to some extent by incomplete enumeration.

Source: 1996 and 2001 Census custom tabulations. Adapted from Norris (1998, 2007).

TABLE 1**Selected Youth – Related Indicators¹ for Aboriginal Language Vitality² by Viable and Endangered Languages, Canada 2001 Census**

	2001	2001	2001	Selected Youth – Related Indicators: 1996 % of Children in, with Ability, Mother Tongue, Home Language; and 2001 Average Age of Populations						
Aboriginal Languages	Total Aboriginal Mother Tongue Population	Continuity Index	Ability / Second Language Index	Knowledge/ Ability to Speak		Mother Tongue		Home Language		Viability Status of Language, 1996, 2001
				% of Children	Avg. Age	% of Children	Avg. Age	% of Children	Avg. Age	
Total Aboriginal Languages	203,300	64	120	93.7	32.1	47.1	32.9	37.6	29.7	viable and endangered
				%		%		%		
Algonquian Family	142,090	62	120	94.5	32.5	43.8	33.3	34.0	30.6	mostly viable
Cree ³	80,075	62	121	96.7	32.4	45.4	33.0	35.7	30.8	viable large
Ojibway ³	23,520	45	130	87.1	38.0	24.9	40.1	16.0	37.3	viable large
Montagnais-Naskapi	9,890	91	106	98.5	26.0	87.3	26.1	81.1	25.6	viable small
Micmac	7,650	65	117	96.0	31.3	49.3	32.5	30.9	31.7	viable small
Oji-Cree ²	9,875	73	106	95.9	26.2	58.0	26.4	43.7	25.9	viable small
Attikamek	4,725	95	105	96.9	22.7	93.3	22.9	91.8	22.3	viable small
Blackfoot	3,025	56	149	90.7	40.8	7.9	45.7	4.6	46.0	viable/uncertain
Algonquin	1,860	30	130	89.5	30.2	56.8	32.1	17.9	36.3	viable/uncertain
Malecite	825	33	133	86.8	40.6	2.6	40.8	7.9	44.7	viable/uncertain
Algonquian NIE	645	19	154	n/a	44.1	n/a	49.1	n/a	48.8	uncertain
Inuktitut Family	29,695	82	110	98.1	25.0	79.0	25.1	69.9	24.2	viable large
Athapaskan Family	18,530	63	121	90.9	33.1	41.4	34.3	33.2	31.0	mostly viable
Dene	9,595	81	110	94.4	27.2	66.8	27.6	58.1	26.2	viable small
South Slave ⁴	1,460	39	151	93.0	37.8	28.7	42.5	18.9	44.3	viable/uncertain
Dogrib	1,925	70	119	96.7	29.3	50.0	30.7	32.8	31.3	viable small
Carrier	1,445	34	142	88.7	43.4	7.5	48.1	4.7	49.9	viable/uncertain
Chipewyan	655	27	144	79.8	45.8	11.0	49.4	7.3	51.1	viable/uncertain
Athapaskan, NIE	1,210	22	140	80.7	41.5	12.3	45.6	7.0	50.3	uncertain
Chilcotin	1,010	53	113	90.0	37.3	8.0	39.1	4.0	43.3	viable small
Kutchin-Gwich'in (Loucheux)	365	15	137	74.4	50.4	11.6	53.7	4.7	61.8	endangered
North Slave (Hare) ⁴	865	55	119	n/a	35.7	n/a	38.0	n/a	38.3	endangered
(Dakota) Siouan Family	4,310	66	115	83.1	31.9	38.6	32.9	33.1	28.9	viable small
Salish Family	3,210	20	156	67.5	41.5	8.9	50.0	1.6	46.9	endangered
Salish NIE	1,920	21	157		41.2		51.4		47.8	endangered
Shuswap	815	19	154		39.4		45.3		41.0	endangered
Thompson	475	18	151		46.5		52.8		52.7	endangered
Tsimshian Family	2,030	26	135	89.8	48.8	10.2	53.7	0.8	55.6	mostly endangered
Gitksan	1,000	31	132		45.7		49.9		52.2	viable/uncertain
Nishga	600	23	153		46.9		53.9		55.4	endangered
Tsimshian	430	21	117		61.4		62.2		67.9	endangered
Wakashan Family	1,445	14	123	52.5	48.8	3.4	54.6	0.0	50.0	endangered
Wakashan	980	18	130		48.7		54.5		48.6	endangered
Nootka	465	6	109		49.1		55.0		58.3	endangered
Iroquoian Family ⁵	670	8	150	43.8	37.7	31.3	44.0	0.0	39.9	uncertain
Mohawk	425	8	178		35.4		42.5		34.0	uncertain
Iroquoian NIE	245	8	102		45.0		46.7		50.1	uncertain
Haida Isolate	165	6	164	64.7	48.8	23.5	56.2	0.0	50.2	endangered
Kutenai Isolate	170	29	129	(all 3 isolates)	41.5	(all 3 isolates)	49.0	(all 3 isolates)	42.9	endangered
Tlingit Isolate	105	5	219		41.4		53.7		58.9	endangered
Aboriginal Lang NIE	880	24	159	n/a	44.1	n/a	44.9	n/a	44.9	endangered

FIGURE 6**Second Language Speakers as Percentage of Population Speaking Endangered and Viable Languages, Canada, 2001**

Source: 2001 Census, Norris (2007) (CST).

Inuktitut well also identify a need for support through family, community, and education, with opportunities to learn, hear, and use it (Tulloch, 2005).

Yet for these encouraging trends to continue, today's youth will have to overcome significant challenges in their role as future parents charged with passing on the language to the next generation. For those youth who are first-language speakers of more viable languages, the challenge lies in maintaining their mother tongue as a home language as they enter their family formation years, to ensure their language becomes the mother tongue of their children.

The crucial question for Aboriginal youth who are second-language speakers, especially in relation to the revitalization of endangered languages, concerns the extent to which they, as parents, will be able to transmit knowledge of their language to their own children. They may face particular difficulties depending on their degree of fluency and the day-to-day use of the language within home and community. If home use as a "major language" erodes, then so do the chances of it being passed on as the mother tongue of their children. However, it may be that even speaking an Aboriginal language on a regular basis could contribute to

continuity to some extent (Norris and Jantzen, 2003), or at least provide children with knowledge of their ancestral tongue as a second language. Finally, for some of the most endangered languages the prospect of aging second-language speakers cannot be ignored: "high shares of second language speakers do not always imply younger speakers. For example, in 2001 virtually none of the 500 people who could speak Tsimshian were under the age of 25, even though 32% were second language speakers" (Norris, 2007:24).

Ultimately, trends suggesting renewed interest in the vitality of Aboriginal languages among Aboriginal youth are to be celebrated. The ability to speak the language of their ancestors affords youth opportunities to communicate with older family members in their traditional language, which contributes to maintenance of traditional cultures. The process of learning an Aboriginal language may also contribute to increased self-esteem of youth and community well-being, as well as cultural continuity (Chandler, 2006; Canadian Heritage, 2005).

While second-language acquisition by today's youth arises out of a growing demographic necessity, it also reflects increasing interest and opportunities for renewal. Only time will tell whether this phenomenon will have fostered new generations of speakers, or have been a harbinger of further decline.

The importance of youth helping to keep their Aboriginal languages alive is best captured by the words of the parents of the young Cree teenager who sang Canada's national anthem in her family's traditional language in February, 2007: "It's good news for Aboriginal people...when our daughter sings the Cree version of 'O Canada' to the Elders, they feel goose bumps. It really feels like you just said a prayer to the creator."⁷

Notes

- 1 Sources online as of June 8, 2007:
<www.cbc.ca/canada/edmonton/story/2007/02/01/ocanada-cree.html>
<www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2007/02/03/cree-hockey.html>
<www.cbc.ca/clips/mov/jiwan-singer070203.mov>
<www.cbc.ca/radioshows/AS_IT_HAPPENS/20070205.shtml>.
- 2 Source: <www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginal/issues/schools-e.html>.
- 3 Some caution is required in comparing Aboriginal populations between censuses, due to ethnic mobility and fluidity in self-identity among the Aboriginal population. Also, intercensal comparisons of Aboriginal language data can be affected by differentials in coverage, incomplete enumeration, reporting, content, and questions, which have been controlled for where feasible.
- 4 The prospects of transmitting a language as a mother tongue can be assessed using an index of continuity (HL/MT), which measures the number of people who speak the language at home for every 100 persons who speak it as their mother tongue. A ratio less than 100 indicates some decline in the strength of the language (i.e., for every 100 people with an Aboriginal mother tongue, there are fewer than 100 in the overall population who use it at home). The lower the score, the greater the decline or erosion of the language.
- 5 For more discussion on viable and endangered languages, see Kinkade (1991) and Norris (1998, 2005, 2006, 2007). Note that Kinkade classified Aboriginal languages in Canada into five language states: already extinct, near extinction, endangered, viable but with a small population base, and viable with a large population.

Endangered languages are spoken by enough people to make survival a possibility, tending to have small populations, older speakers, and lower rates of language transmission or continuity, with many located in British Columbia.

Viable but small languages have generally more than 1,000 speakers and are spoken in isolated or well organized communities with strong self-awareness. They can be considered viable if their continuity is high and they have relatively young speakers (e.g., Attikamek and Dene).

Viable large languages have a large enough population base that long-term survival is likely assured. This includes Cree, Inuktitut, and Ojibway.

Census data are available for viable and endangered languages, but are not available separately for languages near extinction owing to the small number of speakers.
- 6 An index of second-language acquisition or ability (KN/MT) compares the number of people who report being able to speak the language with the number who have that Aboriginal language as a mother tongue. If for every 100 people with a specific Aboriginal mother tongue, more than 100 persons in the overall population are able to speak that language, then some learned it as a second language either in school or later in life. This may suggest some degree of language revival. Note that separate indexes of second language acquisition have been calculated for the Aboriginal identity and the total population (regardless of identity).
- 7 <www.cbc.ca/canada/edmonton/story/2007/02/01/ocanada-cree.html>. Online as of June 8, 2007.

Full references are available in the online version of this issue. It can be accessed by visiting the PRI web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>

Cultural Continuity as a Protective Factor against Suicide in First Nations Youth

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The question of whether, in some legendary and less trammeled past, the tragedy of suicide among Canada's Aboriginal youth was once less commonplace than it is today is, perhaps, unanswerable. What is not open to serious doubt is the accumulating body of contemporary evidence (evidence forcibly brought to public attention by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples) demonstrating that, at least among certain of Canada's First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, youth suicide rates have reached calamitous proportions – rates said to be higher than those of any culturally identifiable group in the world (Kirmayer, 1994). The remarkable outpouring of concern over such suicides that followed in the wake of the Royal Commission resulted in scores of public gatherings, funded research initiatives, government reports, and scholarly publications. Although this literature is much too large to be summarized here, it is, nevertheless, possible to extract from all of these efforts a few summary conclusions to guide future research and practice.

The most obvious of these conclusions is that youth suicide is so devastating to families and friends and communities there is not (and should not be) any holding back on the range of well-intended impulses to ameliorate and prevent such tragedies. In our collective rush to be helpful, however, such preventive efforts often seriously outstrip available knowledge concerning the actual causes of suicide. To correct this imbalance, a greater proportion of our collective energies and resources needs to be devoted to better understanding

the circumstances responsible for the high rates of youth suicide that characterize some Aboriginal communities, but not others.

A second general conclusion to emerge from the available research literature is that the most promising unit of analysis is not individual youth, but rather the whole cultural communities in which they live (Lester and Yang, 2006). This follows because given that suicide is statistically rare (even when it is epidemic), it is almost never possible to predict who will or won't take their own life (Rosen, 1954); and because, although changing the subterranean thoughts and feelings of suicidal individuals remains a poorly understood art, what is required to address the crying needs of whole Aboriginal communities that exhibit extraordinarily high rates of youth suicide, is often painfully obvious.

Together, these rules of thumb underscore the importance of searching out factors associated with community-level variability in youth suicide rates and have dictated the course of the decade-long program of research to be summarized in the balance of this account.

Cultural Continuity and Suicide in First Nations Youth

Because they are otherwise remarkably robust, death among Aboriginal youth often proves to be self-appointed. After "accidents," suicide is the major killer of young Aboriginal persons (Statistics Canada, 2001). In British Columbia, for example, where the data summarized here were collected, First Nations

youth take their own lives at rates variously estimated to be between 5 and 20 times higher than that of the non-Aboriginal population (Chandler et al., 2003). Such summary statistics, while technically correct, need to be understood as “actuarial fictions” that regularly hide more than they reveal. Indiscriminately painting the whole of Canada’s (or British Columbia’s) First Nations with the same broad brush not only obscures the real cultural diversity that marks the lives of Aboriginal peoples, but also mistakenly substitutes the banner headline of “Aboriginality” for a much larger set of factors that could better explain the variability in suicide rates across First Nations communities.

Far from being uniformly distributed, the rate of Aboriginal youth suicide across the 200 bands in British Columbia actually varies in wildly saw-toothed ways (Chandler and Lalonde, 1998; Chandler et al., 2003). This has set an agenda for more than a decade of our own research with a focus on why some Aboriginal communities experience epidemic rates of youth suicide, while such deaths are largely unknown in others.

A Developmental Back-Story

The research being reported began with the wonderment of how it could possibly happen that, with all of life’s potential, young people could so frequently take steps to end their own lives. Our earliest research efforts showed that suicide risk is related to a set of common pitfalls that mark the usual course of identity development (Chandler and Ball, 1990). Failures in

FIGURE 1

Youth Suicide Rate by Band (1987-2000)

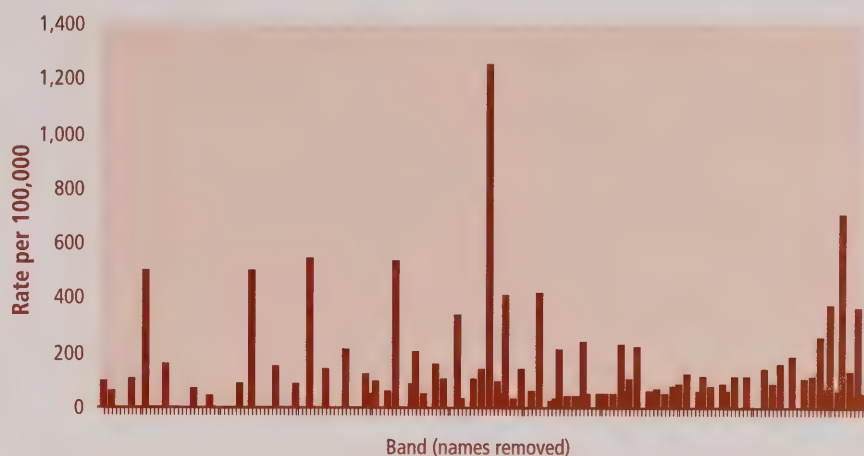
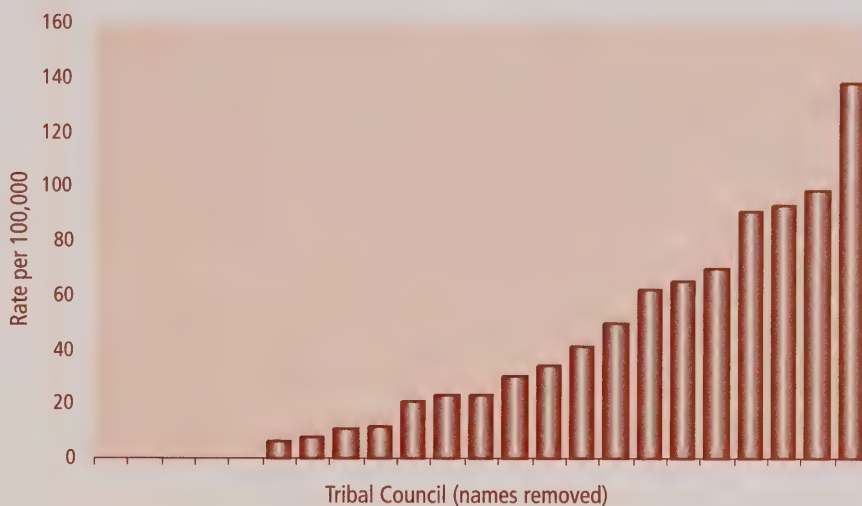


FIGURE 2

Youth Suicide Rate by Tribal Council (1987-2000)



constructing a sense of ownership of one’s personal and collective past, and some commitment to one’s own future prospects, were associated with a dramatically heightened risk of

suicide. In the absence of a sense of personal and cultural continuity, our ongoing studies show that life is easily cheapened, and the possibility of suicide becomes a live option.

From Normative to Risk and Resilience Research

However hazardous growing up may otherwise be, such risks are necessarily magnified when the cultural backcloth against which development naturally unfolds is unravelled by

The predictable consequence of such personal and cultural losses is often disillusionment, lassitude, substance abuse, self-injury and, most dramatically, self-appointed death at an early age.

social-cultural adversities. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the identity struggles of young Aboriginal persons who must construct a sense of self-hood out of the remnants of a way of life that harsh colonial practices have systematically overthrown. In the best circumstances, one's culture can be counted on to provide young people with a backstop – some measure of sameness while outgrowing childish ways. If, instead, one's culture has been marginalized (because of colonization or decolonization or globalization), the trustworthy ways of one's community are criminalized, legislated out of existence, or otherwise assimilated beyond easy recognition, then the path for those transiting toward maturity becomes much more difficult. This is the fate, we argue, of many Indigenous youth around the world. Their culture of origin no longer computes, and their paradise has been turned into a parking lot. The predictable consequence of such personal and cultural losses is often disillusionment, lassitude, substance abuse, self-injury and, most dramatically, self-appointed death at an early age.

To the degree that the above comments hold any promise for helping us better understand why the burden of suicide falls so disproportionately on the young, and especially on some (but not other) young Aboriginal persons, then a network of related hypotheses suggest themselves.

From Self- to Cultural Continuity

If, as argued, cultural continuity forms a critical backstop to the routine foibles of identity formation, then it similarly follows that community-level rates of youth suicide should also vary as a function of the degree to which particular Aboriginal communities find themselves bereft of meaningful connections to their traditional past, and otherwise cut off from local control of their own future prospects. More particularly, two testable claims flow from these expectations.

The first is that, because different Aboriginal communities have differently weathered their typically negative contacts with the non-Aboriginal world, their collective responses to such adversities should be equally variable. With particular reference to the problem of youth suicide, it ought to follow that, when viewed at the level of British Columbia's almost 200 separate bands, the rate at which youth suicides occur should also vary among communities.

Second, and because communities have met with varying levels of success in rehabilitating their culture, it should also happen that suicide rates will be lower in those bands that have achieved a greater measure of success in reconnecting to their traditional past, and in building ties to some shared future.

Both of these hypotheses have now been tested in two separate waves of data collection that cover the years 1987 to 2000. In both studies, every confirmed Aboriginal suicide in British Columbia was classified by band of origin and each of the province's 197 recognized bands were dichotomously coded in terms of the presence or absence of six and later eight "cultural continuity" factors, described in more detail below. Summary findings from these two data sets are reported in the paragraphs that follow.

Results

Hypothesis One: Province-Wide Youth Suicide Rates as an Actuarial Fiction

The observed suicide rate for the First Nations population of British Columbia during the period 1987 to 2000 was more than double the provincial average. If, against reason, suicide rates were unrelated to band membership, then tabulating the suicide rate for each band would have resulted in a more or less rectangular distribution. As shown in Figure 1, however, something much closer to the opposite is true. What this sawtoothed picture makes clear is that many Aboriginal communities in British Columbia suffered no youth (aged 15 to 24 years) suicides during

the 1987 to 2000 period, while, for others, the rate was many times higher than the provincial average. Figure 2 arrays youth suicide rates by tribal council.

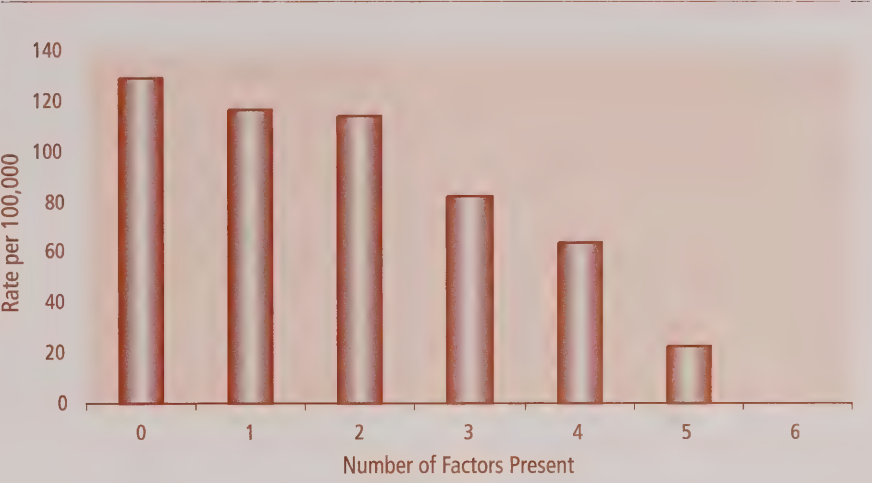
What these data show is that nearly 90 percent of suicides occur in less than 10 percent of communities, and that in more than half of all bands, and 20 percent of tribal councils, youth suicide is effectively unknown. Clearly, the “epidemic” of youth suicides regularly reported in the popular press is not a “First Nations” epidemic, but a tragedy suffered by some communities and not others.

Hypothesis Two: Cultural Continuity As a Hedge against Aboriginal Youth Suicide

Hypothesis Two was predicated on the assumption that distinctive cultural groups, like individual selves, are constituted by identity-preserving practices that forge links to a common past and future. On this prospect, it was anticipated that First Nations communities bereft of such culture-sustaining ties would be at special risk for suicide, while those that had achieved greater measures of success in preserving cultural connections would be better shielded from the “slings and arrows” that regularly cost young Aboriginal persons appropriate levels of care and concern for their own future well-being.

Two waves of data, meant to test this hypothesis, were again collected. During the first study period (1987 to 1992), available records were carefully sifted to locate community-level variables descriptive of common efforts to preserve links to a shared

FIGURE 3
Youth Suicide Rate by Number of Factors Present (1987-1992)

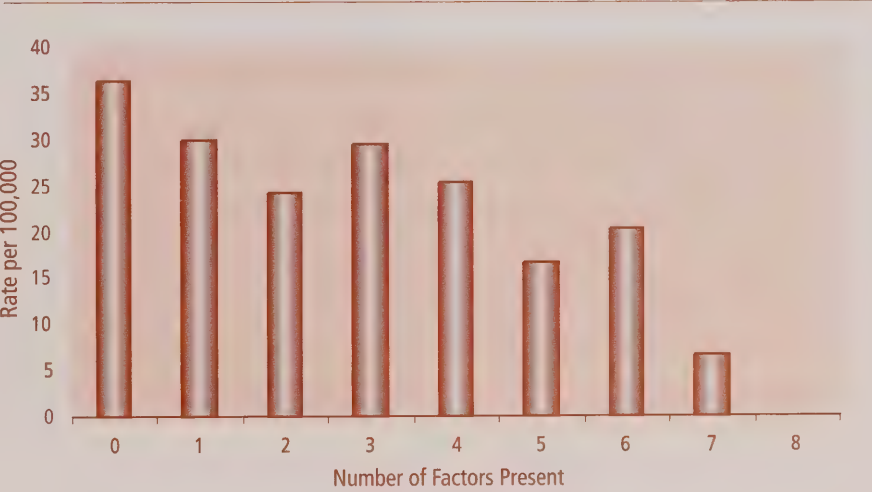


cultural past, and to forge a common cultural future. Six such markers of cultural continuity were initially identified, including indications of whether communities had achieved a measure of self-government, litigated for Aboriginal title to traditional lands, accomplished a measure of local control over health, education

and policing services, and created community facilities for the preservation of culture. Summing across these dichotomized measures yielded an overall cultural continuity index ranging from 0 to 6.

The average youth suicide rates for all bands scoring at one or the other

FIGURE 4
Total Suicide Rate by Number of Factors Present (1993-2000)



of these six cultural continuity levels are detailed in Figure 3. Bands that evidenced all of these cultural continuity factors had *no* youth suicides during our first study window. By contrast, bands that evidenced none of these “protective” factors suffered youth suicide rates many times the national average.

The addition of measures of local control over child welfare services, and the involvement of women in band governance (band councils composed of more than 50 percent women) were also shown to evidence dramatically lower youth suicide rates. As shown in Figure 4, bands characterized by all eight of these cultural continuity factors show zero-order levels of both youth and adult suicide, while those characterized by none of these factors suffer epidemic suicide levels.

Conclusion

Taken altogether, this extended program of research strongly supports two major conclusions. First, generic claims about youth suicide rates for the whole of any Aboriginal world are, at best, actuarial fictions that obscure critical community-by-community differences in the frequency of such deaths. Second, individual and cultural continuity are strongly linked, such that First Nations communities that succeed in taking steps to preserve their heritage culture and work to control their own destinies are dramatically more successful in insulating their youth against the risks of suicide.

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Uqausirtinnik Annirusunniq

Longing for Our Language

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In 1999, I travelled to Iqaluit, Nunavut. I had set out to identify the foundation in place for the promotion of the Inuit language – one of the goals of the fledgling territory (cf. Nunavut Implementation Commission, 1996; Nunavut, 1999). Common wisdom in language policy and planning says that efforts must be grounded in the desires and capacity of the population (cf. Burnaby and Reyhner, 2002; Fishman, 1991; Hinton and Hale, 2001; Kaplan and

40 Inuit youth, reinforced by 130 closed questionnaires, and 16 months of participant observation in Baffin communities (and later by interviews in other regions and with different age groups) support the policy-maker's intuition. While most youth in Nunavut have knowledge of and opportunities to use the Inuit language, these are generally insufficient to meet their internal standards and interactional goals (an idea developed in Tulloch, 2004). The motivations of

(A1) I think that's become more and more apparent. There are a lot of Inuit beneficiaries who do not speak Inuktitut.... It's new, they are Inuit but they don't speak it.... For the adults, it's hard...to communicate...the communication becomes a problem. There's not enough...they're not communicating with their elders or their extended family members who are older.... There's no interaction. The same goes in the workplace, when they don't speak Inuktitut, even if they understand it, then they're missing out on something that connects you to the social structure as well as culture.... They get discouraged and feel sometimes like they're not really part of that, unfortunately.... Social acceptance... we all want to belong to something. And I think that's where sometimes there is a bit of a friction. Not a friction, but, discontent.

The promotion is very good, I think.... You've got to keep using the language to keep it strong. You have to speak it and practise it. For the people that were sort of drawing away from that, I hope that allows them to come back into the ring.... Bring back their pride of who they are and where they come from. And go back into...the social net.

Baldauf, 1997). I determined to learn what Inuit aspired for their language, and why. In my first interview, the Inuit policy maker quoted above (A1) provided insight into a pressing motivation for ensuring all Inuit have access to knowing, learning, and using their ancestral language: the language brings and binds community members together. Without it, some Inuit feel disconnected; they miss acceptance and the opportunity to participate fully in their community. Subsequent interviews with

youth for practising and developing the Inuit language are practical and pragmatic. Their experience of language shift¹ is linked with tangible gaps in communication, community integration, and participation.

Loss

The loss of indigenous languages across Canada is well documented (e.g., Standing Committee for Aboriginal Affairs, 1990; RCAP, 1996; Norris, 2006). Regions, communities, and families experienced a shift to varying

degrees, with youth generally reporting weaker indigenous language skills than their parents.² The loss is linked to intensive contact with non-indigenous populations where Inuit, like other indigenous groups, were pressured to adopt the dominant language and culture. Families and communities were disrupted as children attended residential schools,

but the subtle imposition of the dominant language continues.⁵ Stable bilingualism is the goal, but not the current reality.

Desire

The need and desire to maintain indigenous languages is often publicly articulated on the basis of the languages' inherent value. Languages are

(D4) I was brought up with my grandparents. My grandparents are born and raised in the North, out on the land and that's the language they know.... At home, in the family, it's Inuktitut. Communication just wouldn't be the same [if I tried to use English]. I'd just see my grandparents with a really confused look on their face, or disgusted, in a way. For them, it's just not being respectful. Some people just don't have exceptions to that.... I was brought up to speak Inuktitut, because it's in our lives, it's our world of communicating; it's our way of understanding each other, because English is to everyone their second language. We have different ways of communicating, we have different ways of understanding, and just being able to say I'm Inuk and I am proud to be Inuk when I speak Inuktitut. To be able to have the knowledge of our ancestors, carrying on the traditions.... I'm a senior drum dancer. A lot of people when they look at tradition it's singing, drumming, how they dealt with people, but Inuktitut to me is also one of those things....

In Inuktitut being able to go to an elder, and ask questions and just sit there and talk. You have more opportunities if you know both languages. You are able to get more information out to more people than you would just in English. Not leaving anyone out.

sometimes returning unable, or unwilling, to speak their parents' language (cf. RCAP, 1996; Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures, 2005).³ Memories of forced assimilation and enacted ascendancy by non-Inuit linger in the minds of middle-aged Inuit parents and grandparents.⁴ Some favoured English in the home, mistakenly believing that transmitting the Inuit language would disadvantage their children. Most aspire now to pass on the Inuit language to their children before or alongside their acquisition of English,

emblems of a distinct identity, coifers of a unique culture, and vehicles of valued traditions. While such motivations are salient among youth, focusing on them risks suggesting that the importance of the language is *only* symbolic. Interviews with Inuit youth reveal that their concern when the language is lost and their joy when it is strong are based on what they concretely and tangibly *do* with the language. The Inuit language is a privileged tool for self-expression, as well as for family and community bonding, co-operation, and advance-

ment. Breakdowns in language competence are linked to interruptions in the social network. The reverse is also true: advanced (or advancing) competence seems linked to increasing opportunities for community engagement. The pragmatic focus of youth shines through in the following vignettes from three young Inuit, who tell what their proficiency (strong, weak, or improving) has meant to them as individuals and community members.⁶

Integration

While many Inuit youth speak the Inuit language competently, this young woman (D4) exudes uncommon confidence in her linguistic and cultural abilities. Her aptitude, like those with similar skills, is linked to time spent with older family members and engaged in other, traditional forms of self-expression. Being able to interact in the Inuit language enables youth to show respect, conform to community norms, and demonstrate pride in belonging to the Inuit community. Choosing the Inuit language or English, as appropriate, facilitates communication: Inuktitut is the Inuit "way of understanding each other," the language of the Elders, a language that "leaves no one out." These themes of the Inuit language as a privileged tool for community participation are prevalent in interviews with Inuit youth.

Separation

Sometimes, the effects of the practical value of Inuktitut are heartbreaking. Those who cannot speak and understand it poignantly express how the communicative potential of

Inuktitut becomes a source of tears and separation, not pleasure and integration (as described above). Without the Inuit language, Inuit youth feel hindered from learning from older Inuit, acquiring traditional skills and talking about the way things used to be or even better understanding Inuit perspectives. Youth, like the woman quoted below (D3), feel held back in

interactional: they are based on visiting, being around Inuktitut speakers, spending time in communities where the language is more vital and taking opportunities to speak Inuktitut. The final youth quoted on the following page (D13) shows the challenge of bilingualism, motivation for balancing two languages, and hope for change.

(D3) I don't exactly remember what my teacher told me, I was just told not to speak that language anymore so I told my mom the exact same thing and it hurt her feelings very much, so she just stopped. And my dad stopped speaking to me, Inuktitut to me. So I never spoke it since.... I guess it changed my relationship with my mom and dad; just not relating to one another, deeply as Inuks. They don't speak to me about their experiences in Inuktitut of being out on the land, or just day-to-day things from their perspective because their first language is Inuktitut and not English.... I've lost being able to communicate comfortably with other Inuit, like my friends' parents. I can't go to my dad's friends' house and speak with their wives and learn how to sew and learn what they thought was important, of their experiences of how they grew up. When I'm at the store and I see an elderly lady who looks like she wants to speak to me, I just sort of smile at her and keep walking, because I know I won't be able to understand her.

intimately relating to their parents or assuming their membership in the Inuit community. The Inuit language is more than an abstract symbol; it is a concrete necessity for taking hold of the life one desires.

Restoration

The woman quoted above has since begun to regain her parents' language, and then transmit what she does know to her children. Others experiencing loss have made similar efforts. Their motivation in regaining the language is *communicative*: they want to be able to understand when people speak in Inuktitut, and to address others in the language expected. The means of reacquisition are

Responsibility

Youth assume responsibility for maintaining or regaining their language, but they need help from family, community, organizations, and governments. The youths' comments about why they need the Inuit language do not allow policy makers to dismiss indigenous languages as a luxury in an English-dominated world. The languages are not a luxury any more than are communicating with one's parents and grandparents, knowing where one comes from, and being able to gain the kind of education one values (i.e., knowledge of traditional practices and perspectives). If language planning is based on

the needs, capacities, and desires of the speakers, initiatives to support language development for Inuit youth can tie into those expressed above in the following ways:

1. Validate the struggle. Recognize the value of the language. Acknowledge one's role (individual or institutional) in its maintenance or loss.
2. Restore interaction. Facilitate and fund programs that emphasize interaction (especially intergenerational) and community integration, for example, through mentoring partnerships and learning circles.⁷
3. Intervention must also support ongoing learning and use by neutralizing factors leading to loss, for example better integrating Inuit language, values, and lived realities in northern schools.⁸

Conclusion

For many Inuit youth, the ancestral language is a source of pleasure, of connection, of belonging. But for others, and increasingly so as fewer youth are proficient speakers, the inability to correspond to community norms and to communicate freely with Elders and parents contributes to feelings of alienation and disinheritance. Helping youth to enhance their abilities in the Inuit language also helps them to interact more freely within their communities and to feel, as the first woman I spoke to in Iqaluit suggested, like they're "a part of it," "social acceptance," "a sense of pride," and to "come back into the social net."⁹ The experiences of the youths highlighted here show how language policy and planning goes

beyond addressing language concerns. The need for language revitalization initiatives – and responses to the need – reflect and address broader issues of community well-being. Just as the shift away from indigenous languages to English (or French) is symptomatic

bilingualism, where both languages are used, and ends with reduced knowledge and use of language A at the community level (cf. Fishman, 2001). The shift often occurs over multiple generations. However, in the cases seen here, youth are observing shift in progress (Tulloch, 2004).

English only (elected officials are an exception). The lure of mass media (movies, Internet, television, video games) is largely in English. Non-Inuit in the communities rarely become conversational in the Inuit language. Even Inuit siblings and friends use English (sometimes). In many ways, English has become a default language.

(D13) I grew up speaking Inuktitut until high school. That's when I started speaking more English than Inuktitut. And where I work, well, I speak more Inuktitut now, which is good, because I realized that I was losing it....

My whole family's Inuk.... When I speak to my dad, usually, it's through my mom.... When I have something to say...I'll...try to say it in Inuktitut, but he won't understand, so my mom will have to repeat it.... I want to move to a smaller community so I'll bring it back, you know? Make it strong again. Because it's my language...my culture. And I don't want to lose it.... It seems like I lost it so fast, you know? Without realizing it.... I'm getting it back. Not as fast as I'm hoping, but I'm doing better, because now I'm speaking it more, like, steady pace.... When I'm helping customers who are elders in...[the store], and they'll ask me stuff in Inuktitut...and I won't know. But it makes me want to visit them more.... Being around more Inuktitut-speaking people. And speaking Inuktitut back to them rather than speaking English. That's what I've been doing. [With] my friend...I'll speak Inuktitut as long as I can. And that's helping.... I just want to speak it.... I know someone who spoke good Inuktitut, then he moved down South...and he lost it, but he gained it back and now he's even stronger. I wish that would happen to me.

of broader societal changes (including impositions from the outside, disruptions of families, etc.) so too do the responses promise to have wide-ranging effects surpassing the preservation of the language. While a salient goal in itself, promoting communicative competence in the Inuit language promises also to be a catalyst and cornerstone for other aspects of community development.

Notes

- 1 Language shift occurs when a community of speakers changes from being predominant speakers of one language (language A) to being predominant speakers of another language (language B). It usually passes through a period of

- 2 Revitalization efforts in some areas lead to a new generation learning the

indigenous language as a second language, rejuvenating the population of younger speakers (e.g., Norris and Jantzen, 2004).

- 3 As quoted in RCAP (1996) and the Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures (2005), many now tell stories of enforced shame and humiliation for speaking their indigenous language in the schools. For further discussion of Inuit in residential schools, see King (1996) and Milloy (1999, Ch. 11).
- 4 As seen, for example, in recent interviews and radio call-in shows conducted by the Nunavut Literacy Council.
- 5 In Nunavut, for example, many authority figures (bosses, teachers, bank managers, RCMP officers), speak

- 6 The Inuit youth quoted here are all women, aged 20 to 25, living in Iqaluit, interviewed between 1999 and 2001. Their parents are all Inuit. Inuktitut was their mother tongue. Although only three women are quoted, their comments and experiences are typical of the range found in the larger corpus of interviews, questionnaires, and participant observation in the Baffin region. Similar themes have come up in subsequent work in other communities.
- 7 Reclaiming Our Sinews is an example of a successful initiative that enhanced language learning through interaction between all ages of women in a sewing circle (funded by Canadian Heritage, see description in Nunavut Literacy Council, 2004). The master-apprentice program developed by Leanne Hinton (Hinton et al., 2002) is an example of mentoring partnerships that have been implemented across North America for successful language revitalization.
- 8 Ideas to this end are developed in Berger (2006) and Martin (2000).
- 9 Follow-up interviews with Inuit elders suggested that they, too, suffer when youth do not understand the Inuit language. They also experience the disconnect and disruption as their grandchildren and great-grandchildren use what was, in their earlier days, the language of the oppressor. They suffer from the breakdown in intergenerational communication and wish to be part of the revitalization to help youth learn, remember, and use the Inuit language, but also (and so that they can) continue to interact with and learn from the elders.

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Emerging Leaders

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The Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council – A Voice for the Future of Inuit

Youth comprise more than half the population of the 155,000 people represented by the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC).¹ Their numbers and vision are indicative of the budding potency for collective youth action. The Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council (ICYC) was created in 1994 with the mandate to develop the Inuit² youth network, develop national Inuit youth organizations, and secure a seat on the ICC executive council. Every four years, during ICC's General Assembly, youth elect a new council consisting of two representatives each from Greenland, Canada, Alaska and Russia (Chukotka), as well as a chair from the host country (rotating).

The 2002-2006 Council was chaired by Miali-Elise Coley (Canada), with executive members Jonathan Epoo, Eric Nutarariaq (Canada), Elizabeth Saagulik Hensley, Lee Ryan (Alaska), Upaluk Poppel, Janus Kleist (Greenland) and Lubov Tajan (Chukotka). This team collaborated primarily via teleconferences and emails. Their efforts focused on suicide prevention, environment, culture, and language.

In 2004, the ICYC began work on what became the First Inuit Circumpolar Youth Symposium on the Inuit Language (ICYSIL).³ The ICYC had identified language as an area which all Inuit youth could relate to and work with. This focus reflected an expression of unity across borders — a desire to celebrate a common heritage while learning about and accepting

differences.⁴ Language is considered a basis to advance other priorities as well: it is a vehicle to cultural maintenance; a tool to receive wisdom from elders and build character; and the core of Inuit identity.⁵

The ICYC identified a set of goals to be realized though the Symposium: to instill pride in speaking the Inuit language; to motivate youth to learn or speak it more often; and to inspire youth to respect all dialects. More broadly, the goal of the Symposium was to engage youth in decision-making and to influence continued preservation of the language.

The ICYC hosted the First Inuit Circumpolar Youth Symposium on the Inuit Language in Iqaluit, Nunavut, from August 15 to 19, 2005. The Honourable Louis Tapardjuk, Inuit Elder and Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth (Government of Nunavut, Canada), launched the Symposium with these words: *"As I look around this room, I realize that I am looking at the generation that the rest of us are depending on to carry the Inuit language into the future."* Together, 20 diverse Inuit youth – hunters, artists, students, leaders, teachers – representing Alaska, Greenland and Canada,⁶ shared experiences and challenged one another to "ignite the light" of the Inuit language as a "hip" way of speaking. Delegates delivered researched presentations, consulted with elders, listened to speeches by guest language policy and planning specialists,⁷ and, above all, engaged in facilitated, focused dialogue.

At the heart of the Symposium was a commitment and call to action. Youth

recognized themselves as agents of language maintenance and development. As individual speakers⁸ and as parents, they committed to developing, sharing, and transmitting the Inuit language. As emerging leaders, they committed to disseminating information, soliciting help from the community (especially Elders), and lobbying governments and organizations for support.⁹ This commitment, encapsulated in the Report from the ICYSIL (Tulloch, 2005), outlines a set of policy recommendations and guiding principles for personal, community and international Inuit language plans.¹⁰ The policy recommendations include:

- Recognize knowledge of the Inuit language as Inuit's fundamental right.
- Support the development of balanced bilingualism.
- Revamp the education system to accurately reflect and represent Inuit in terms of:
 - Inuit teachers trained and equipped;
 - Inuit knowledge, experiences, and values in curriculum;
 - Inuit language resources;
 - Inuit language used and taught through all grades; and
 - Inuit experts (e.g., Elders) incorporated into learning process; students pursuing holistic learning in the community.
- Facilitate collaboration between generations; between and within communities, regions, and countries and with community members, academics, organizations and governments.

- Secure funding for Inuit-driven initiatives to achieve the above.

The Chair of the ICYC presented the Report to ICC's 2006 General Assembly, and it has already generated a series of new initiatives. Greenlandic linguists and the Language Secretariat have taken up the ideas put forward by ICYC and supported a follow-up survey and Mother Tongue Day events in Greenland. The new ICYC executive (2006-2010) adopted language as a top priority (c.f. Alvanna-Stimpfle 2006). The Symposium Report provided a foundation for the Second Inuit Circumpolar Youth Symposium on the Inuit Language, which took place in Alaska in summer 2007.

Many action plans talk about the incorporation and the engagement of youth (e.g., Canada, 1996; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami [ITK] and ICC, 2007). The First Inuit Circumpolar Youth Symposium on the Inuit Language demonstrates power and capacity of youth to mobilize the necessary knowledge and action plans to impact areas of concern to them and to the broader community.¹¹ The work of these emerging leaders can be furthered through enhancing opportunities for youth to come together; by acknowledging their voices and their power to mould their future.

Notes

- 1 Formerly Inuit Circumpolar Conference, named changed at 2006 General Assembly in Barrow, Alaska.
- 2 Following the usage of ICC and ICYC, "Inuit" in this article includes Inuit, Yupik and Aleut.
- 3 Primary funding for the Symposium provided by the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, Canadian North, and Qikiqtani Inuit Association.

- 4 A focus taken up in ICC's 2006 General Assembly slogan "Unity within Diversity."
- 5 These, and other arguments for the importance of the indigenous language, are also made by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2005).
- 6 The Russian delegate was, at the last minute, unable to attend due to visa issues. However, a Russian elder and translator were present.
- 7 Including Alexina Kublu, Inuk member of the Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures.
- 8 Language planning researchers, such as Shohamy (2006), have suggested that the real power in shaping language development lies with individual speakers. This is especially true when speakers are in consensus and acting in concert, as the youth delegates of ICYC advocate.
- 9 Even if researchers are increasingly recognizing that a language's character and vitality are most fundamentally shaped by the sum of individuals' actions, legislation and policy are often required to create a *context* where languages *can* be used and where people *can* act to maintain their languages (cf. Brenzinger, Heine and Sommer, 1991).
- 10 The ICYSIL Summary Report is available online at <<http://inuitcircumpolar.com/files/uploads/icc-files/ICYC-Language-Report-English.pdf>>.
- 11 The centrality of language as a concern to Inuit internationally and Aboriginal people more generally is seen, for example, in ICC, 2006a; Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2005; Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures, 2005.

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The Over-Representation of Aboriginal Youth in Custody Policy Challenges

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Although some studies have shown a decline in the number of Aboriginal youth in custody in Canada since the introduction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) in 2003, the disproportionate number of Aboriginal youth incarcerated remains an important policy concern (Latimer and Foss, 2004; Calverly, 2007). For example, according to the 2001 Census data, Aboriginal youth constituted approximately five percent of the Canadian youth population, yet accounted for 33 percent of incarcerated youth (Latimer and Foss, 2004). Thus, the challenge for policy-makers remains how to reduce the continuing large disparity between the proportion of Aboriginal versus non-Aboriginal youth in custody. There are policy options that can respond to this challenge. Based on a review of literature as well as on recent research conducted by some of the authors in British Columbia, this paper discusses some of those options and identifies the associated risk factors that increase the likelihood of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth being sentenced to custody.

Discussion continues among researchers about why there is a disparity in custody rates for both Aboriginal adults and youth. However, there is a growing consensus in the literature on the main risk factors correlated with youth incarceration. Briefly, the three main distal causes for this disparity are: cultural clash, socio-economic factors, and colonialism (Rudin, nd).

First, cultural clash theory postulates that Aboriginal and Western concepts of justice are fundamentally different. As a result, Aboriginal people have

historically felt mistreated by the imposition of a Western-based justice system, especially regarding punishment and custodial sentencing. The second theory is largely socio-economic. Stenning and Roberts (2001) assert, for example, that poverty is the primary cause of any group's custodial overrepresentation. The third theory focuses on the catastrophic impact of colonialism on Aboriginal culture and lifestyle. Most importantly, this theory suggests that government policies, explicitly designed to destroy Aboriginal values and traditions through forced assimilation (i.e., the residential school system and the denial of the use of Aboriginal languages and traditions in these schools), in combination with the systematic criminal abuses which took place in these schools and the inter-generational transmission of post-traumatic stress disorders, contributes to the current disproportion of incarcerated Aboriginal youth (Sochting et al., 2007).

Beyond these distal explanations, there are the more proximate risk-factors, largely individual and community based, which arguably provide the most immediate promise for positive policy impacts. These risk factors include extensive reliance on substances and educational shortcomings. According to Latimer and Foss, more than half (57 percent) of incarcerated Aboriginal youth had substance abuse problems, while an additional 25 percent had a suspected problem. In addition, research has indicated that Aboriginal incarcerated youth were approximately two academic years behind their age cohort, and most (89 percent) had attended alternative schools (Corrado and Cohen, 2007).

Based on our research in British Columbia, as well as on research conducted in Australia, there are several policy approaches that we believe can play a role in reducing both Aboriginal youth recidivism and the likelihood of an initial custodial sentence for Aboriginal youth. However, it is beyond the scope of this brief article to discuss all the policy implications that emerge from the research literature. Our focus is limited to two main policy themes: strategies to reduce drug use, and strategies to improve education. These two themes will likely have the most immediate impact on reducing a wide range of risk factors.

Drug Reduction Strategies

The first policy theme is focused on schools and custodial institutions. It involves providing programs to educate youth on the harmful effects of: (1) early drug and alcohol use; (2) persistent drug and alcohol use, including soft drugs; (3) the use of methamphetamines; and, (4) either occasional or persistent use of hard drugs, such as cocaine and heroin. Research has shown (e.g., Renninger and Hoffman, 1999; Ghosh-Dastidar, Longshore, Ellickson, and McCaffrey, 2004) that education programs in schools can reduce substance abuse, such as cigarette smoking and crystal methamphetamine use. Also in this vein, school counsellors, as well as Aboriginal counsellors, peer mentors and elders, can make a difference by providing Aboriginal youth with individual counselling, mentoring, and co-ordinated access to related service needs, such as health care, proper nutrition, anti-bullying programs and victim support, assistance with family

problems, and class performance and school retention support.

For the most part, school-based programs are largely preventive as they can reduce the likelihood of both the initial contact with the criminal justice system and, most importantly, help youth to avoid a custody sentence. Yet these types of initiatives are equally important within custodial institutions. In our previous research (Corrado and Cohen, 2002; Cohen and Corrado, 2005) and in our most recent research (Corrado and Cohen, 2007), it is evident that alcohol and drug use remain prevalent among incarcerated young offenders. One study involving 125 Aboriginal youth found that more than 90 percent reported the onset of drug and alcohol use at a very young age (approximately 11 years old). In custodial contexts, psychiatric and psychological diagnostic services are also important because it is very likely that the frequent use of drugs, especially hard drugs, is associated with childhood traumas often involving family histories of drug, alcohol, physical, and sexual abuse, as well as mental illness and criminality (Corrado and Cohen, 2002; Cohen and Corrado, 2005).

In cases where risk factors are confirmed, intensive therapy services provided both during the incarceration period and after in the community are important. Regarding the latter, in order to sustain positive changes achieved while in custody, the availability of drug-free Aboriginal housing facilities in major urban centres, such as Vancouver is important. This is supported by literature on alcohol and drug relapse which conclude that without community-based

resources, "safe houses," and the presence of mentors, most Aboriginal youth who abused drugs or alcohol will relapse when they return to their former "street life" or peer group contexts (Health Canada, nd; Linklater, 1991).

The importance of school and custodial drug services was also supported by Weatherburn, Snowball, and Hunter (2006), who concluded that school and custodial drug services were necessary to reduce indigenous overrepresentation in the criminal justice system. According to Weatherburn et al. (2006), the effects of drug use were stronger than those of any other risk factor, with the exception of gender. And, regarding imprisonment, substance abuse had the highest effect among the 16 factors identified in the research literature as risk factors for youth and adult contact with criminal justice systems or imprisonment generally and among Aboriginal people specifically. Weatherburn et al. (2006) recommended that coerced treatment programs, such as drug courts, be considered since there is strong evidence based on their other research that they reduce recidivism rates.

Regarding the YCJA, one such mechanism that could be used to a greater degree is the Intensive Rehabilitative Custody and Supervision order (IRCS). Typically reserved for the most serious offences, this mechanism provides custodial sentenced youth with the opportunity to avoid adult sentences in exchange for participating in a comprehensive rehabilitation program while in custody and continuing for a period of time while on a probation order in the community. A distinct advantage to this option is that it facilitates the use of individually

designed, integrated services over a substantial period of time, which is needed for such services to have a significant positive impact. Too often, effective treatment or rehabilitative programs are not used in youth custody because the time a youth typically spends in custody is too short to make significant positive progress. However, expanding the use of sentencing options, such as IRCS, would require both federal legislative changes to modify the range of offences which make a young offender eligible for this option and an increase in federal funding for such intensive rehabilitation programs.

Given that Aboriginal youth, under the YCJA, are subject to a “Gladue Report” (*R. v. Gladue*, 1999), which instructs judges and probation officers to specifically consider the special needs of Aboriginal youth during sentencing, provincial policies could ensure that treatment interventions, when appropriate, are linked to all custodial sentences with probation orders. This would ensure that all rehabilitative or treatment programs are continued in the community once the youth is released from custody. These changes would help to address a basic policy challenge for probation officers: obtaining the resources and programs needed to implement an integrated custody-to-community rehabilitation plan, such as psychiatric or psychological treatment, anger management programs, and housing. Paradoxically, while there are sufficient numbers of Aboriginal youth in major urban centres to justify the cost of treatment programs, the substantial reduction of Aboriginal youth in custody has resulted in far fewer resources being available in non-urban

areas as facilities and resources have been cut. For example, three rural-based youth custodial centres (Boulder Bay, Centre Creek, and Lakeview) have been closed and far fewer programs are financially sustainable in non-urban regions. In contrast, there are waiting lists for several resources and programs in the densely populated Vancouver and Lower Mainland regions of British Columbia.

Education Strategies

In addition to substance abuse policies, there is a growing need to focus on education programs, specifically those designed to increase school performance and retention. There is extensive empirical literature indicating that early problems in school are associated with other risk factors for contact with youth justice system (Loeber and Farrington, 2001). While there is continuing debate about whether school failure and poor school performance are a direct cause of the risk of criminal justice contact and incarceration, there is complete consensus that positive school experiences are a protective factor and a very important indirect factor (Maguin and Loeber, 1996).

Not surprisingly, the education profile in our most recent research on youth in custody confirmed that problems in school, including school performance, were pervasive among both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth. Virtually the entire sample reported that they had previously skipped an entire day of school beginning, on average, at age 12. Moreover, Aboriginal young offenders reported changing schools (non-grade advancement), on average, five times beginning at age 10; most of these youth changed

schools because they were expelled for assaulting other students (63 percent), bringing a weapon to school (58 percent), or being caught with illegal drugs (58 percent) (Corrado and Cohen, 2007).

There is strong evidence that programs that assist children who exhibit learning difficulties in pre-school, kindergarten, and the initial elementary school grades can be effective in facilitating positive school performance experiences. (Herrenkohl et al., 2001; Trembley and LeManquard, 2001). These programs often have a home visit component to assist the parents or primary caregiver in teaching their children basic learning skills. This strategy is particularly important since single parent mothers who are 18 years old or younger are increasingly prevalent within First Nations and Aboriginal communities.

The school component can include specialized teaching instructors and classes focused on learning disorders, as well as Attention Deficit Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disordered children. Aboriginal language programs, such as the unevaluated Stó:lō Nation’s experimental Stó:lō language program, may also help Aboriginal children to adopt more positive early identities as well as develop general language skills.

In terms of school-based strategies, provincial and local school district education policies should be co-ordinated with First Nations education officials. In British Columbia, for example, youth from the Stó:lō Nation attend schools in several districts, and have access to programs specific to the Stó:lō Nation. Within

the Chilliwack School District, Stó:lō Nation representatives participate in the development of certain parts of the school curriculum, to facilitate school performance and retention among Stó:lō students. The Stó:lō Nation also has a program for school dropouts who want to return to complete their basic schooling as adults. Several of these programs are currently being evaluated by request of the Stó:lō Nation and Chilliwack School District, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. In addition, British Columbia has recently created a First Nations school board which will focus on many of the above policy issues.

Another important policy component involves emphasizing better identification of youth with multiple risk factors, and then providing individual case planning designed to assist students with their entire range of risk factors. One promising model program, introduced by the Ford Foundation in the United States, consisted of coaching and cash incentives to encourage school retention. The evaluation of this program found that participants had nearly one third (30 percent) the arrest rate of those who did not participate (Greenwood et al., 1998). Similarly, the Mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg (2007), recently introduced a privately funded program ("conditional cash transfers") to provide targeted cash incentives to parents of "at-risk" children for undertaking specified routine tasks with their children, including helping with homework, doctor visits, and parent-teacher meetings.

While many innovative programs focus on children and adolescents,

labour market programs are also important for increasing the employment possibilities of older at-risk youth; those between the ages of 16 and 18 years old. The Job Corps program in the United States and the Australian Community Development Project, which was specifically aimed at chronically high Indigenous unemployment rates, both showed positive effects on reducing arrest rates (Weatherburn et al., 2006).

Within custodial institutions, school programs are among the most popular with youth. According to a recent McCreary Centre Society report (2007), incarcerated youth in British Columbia detention centres viewed the school program as providing them with a positive learning context, and they wanted related programs to be expanded. As with other custodial programs, the typically short amount of custody time calls for a co-ordination of in-custody programs with those based in the community.

Two other important considerations emerge. First, large class sizes in community schools and more competitive academic contexts do not facilitate a positive learning experience for many multi-risk youth. Second, alternative schools can stigmatize youth as this approach removes youth from regular schools, thus identifying and labelling the student as challenging, problematic, or at risk.

Conclusion

It is beyond the scope of this short article to discuss the array of remaining risk factors associated with the disproportionate custodial rates of Aboriginal youth. Among

the most important are pregnancy risks involving fetal damage affected by excessive stress, malnutrition, smoking, drugs, and alcohol. We have argued elsewhere (Corrado et al., 2002) about the need to institute systematic information gathering for high-risk families and children in order to reduce the entire profile of risks at the earliest possible stages. Also, it is important for policy researchers to review the more integrated systems that hold more promise for successfully addressing the needs of above families and youth. Examples of such models exist in Quebec, Sweden, France, and the United Kingdom (e.g., Trepanier, 2004). In other words, there are no simple policies that will reduce the disproportionate number of Aboriginal youth in custody. Instead, there is convincing research indicating that policies involving early, comprehensive and integrated services and programs for high-risk or multi-risk Aboriginal youth and their families are required in order to reduce the disproportionate number of Aboriginal youth in custody.

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First Nations Youth Health

Recognizing the Challenges, Recognizing the Potential

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The authors wish to recognize the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Youth Council and the First Nations Information Governance Committee, which have provided the direction and knowledge base from which this article was developed.

The AFN Youth Council has set out a vision for First Nations' future generations:

Our people will live as healthy, self-determining First Nations in which they value and respect their individual lives, families, communities, and nations. Our future generations will be raised only on truth and they will live and love their traditional roles, family history, and understand how history relates to who they are. Our people will trust – trust within themselves, within the family, trust within the community, and with other nations, lands and resources.¹

In developing this vision, the AFN Youth Council is seeking to motivate First Nations youth to take charge of their lives and secure a better standard of life, one not weakened by the long-standing effects of colonization or the intergenerational legacy of Indian residential schools.

If the majority of First Nations youth are to realize this vision, several challenges will need to be overcome, with support from national and regional policy and program interventions. As a starting point for informing the development and monitoring of these interventions, this article reviews recent data on First Nations youth living in their communities from the culturally relevant First

Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey (RHS) 2002-03.² As a First Nations-led initiative, the RHS itself provides an example of how First Nations leaders are proactively seeking to inform possible actions in First Nations communities that would offer youth greater opportunities for health, education, traditional teachings, and employment.

Recognizing the Challenges

Living in Balance

According to the RHS 2002-03, the majority of First Nations youth report being in a state of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual balance all or most of the time (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 221). A majority (57.2%) also considered themselves to be in very good or excellent health (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 160). First Nations generally experience health as broader than, strictly speaking, the absence of disease. For instance, a recent study of 25 Aboriginal youth from British Columbia found that expressing emotion/cleansing was one of the most successful strategies to help suicidal youth (Kelly, 2007: 9).

Traditional healing practices espouse the notion of working on enhancing all aspects of one's life including the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual aspects. It requires individuals to search within themselves to recognize and address the underlying causes of their problems. This process of coming into "balance" or "wholeness" is truly a spiritual process, or a process in which the return to traditional spiritual beliefs and practices becomes an integral

part of healing (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 116).

According to the RHS 2002-03, one in eight First Nations youth had consulted a traditional healer within the year (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 223). However, a much higher proportion of youth — ranging between one in three and one in four (depending on gender) remain actively engaged in traditional activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and berry-picking or food-gathering (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 168). About one quarter speak their First Nations language and 82 percent consider it important (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b).

Yet, just over one in four First Nations youth report feeling sad, blue or depressed for two weeks in a row during the course of a year. One in five First Nations youth respondents had a close friend or family member commit suicide in the past year, which also significantly increased their likelihood of having been injured themselves (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b: 187). They were also twice as likely to have thoughts of suicide ideation as those not affected by suicide (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b).

By age 12, 10 percent of First Nations youth have thought about suicide at least once (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 221). This rate climbs to 30 percent at age 17 (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a). For First Nations youth having at least

one parent who attended a residential school, more than one in four (26.3%) have thought about suicide, compared to only 18 percent of those whose parents did not attend a residential school (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 217).

There is also an important gender difference. Male youth are more likely to report being in balance physically and mentally all the time (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 220). Correspondingly, First Nations girls are about twice as likely as boys to consider suicide, despite higher suicide mortality rates among boys (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 222). Further exploration is required to determine the root causes of this gender difference.

Physical Health

As noted above, while the majority of First Nations youth perceive themselves as being in good or excellent health, they are exposed to important risk factors that will presumably affect their long-term physical health. More than two fifths (42%) of First Nations youth are either overweight or obese, and only 45 percent are considered sufficiently active; that is, engaging in 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity most days of the week (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b).

Walking is the most frequently reported physical activity among First Nations youth across all age groups. Just over half report watching three hours or more of television daily, and one in five reports playing video games or using a computer for the same length of time (First Nations

Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b). Overall, 33.5 percent consume a nutritious and balanced diet (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b: 169). Briefly stated, a positive correlation has been found among First Nations youth who are sufficiently active, eat a nutritious and balanced diet, consume berries or wild vegetation and cultural foods, do not have suicidal thoughts, and never smoke cigarettes (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b: 169, 171-172).

Allergies, asthma and chronic ear infections or problems are the most common chronic conditions reported among First Nations youth. These are also the same conditions most commonly found among First Nations children (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b: 178).

Injuries are highly prominent among First Nations youth, reported by just fewer than 50 percent in the space of one year (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b: 184). This is almost double the rate among both Canadian youth and First Nations youth living outside their communities. Data from the RHS 2002-03 suggest that there are barriers to access to treatment for First Nations youth affected by conditions that can have serious impacts on their long-term health and school performance. For instance, while about two thirds of First Nations youth are affected by asthma only 16.5 percent of those affected by chronic bronchitis and 12.6 percent of those diagnosed with a learning disability are receiving treatment for

these conditions (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b).

Health-related Behaviours

Non-traditional tobacco use is prevalent among 37.8 percent of First Nations youth, with higher rates among females, older youth and youth living in isolated communities. Between the ages of 12 and 14, the smoking rate almost triples. Most First Nations youth start smoking during their twelfth year. For those who quit smoking, the average age is 14 and the main reason is choosing a healthier lifestyle, followed by quitting out of respect for loved ones. Close to 70 percent of First Nations youth report attempting to quit smoking over the past year. Although the smoking rate among First Nations youth is higher than among other Canadian youth, the average number of cigarettes smoked per day is lower, at 5.9 versus 8.1 cigarettes (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b: 203-205).

Approximately 65 percent of First Nations youth report consuming more than five drinks in one sitting at least once per month, while 32.7 percent have used cannabis. First Nations youth smokers are more likely to consume both alcohol and cannabis. The RHS 2002-03 findings reinforce previous studies that emphasize the need to prevent early smoking initiation (13 years and younger), not only to address health risks associated with smoking but also to “produce secondary healthy effects by blocking the gateway drug hypothesis” (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b).

First Nations youth who do not indulge in smoking, alcohol and substance use are more likely to agree to some extent that they like the way they are; that they have a lot to be proud of; that many things about them are good; and that they have never thought about suicide (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b: 204). Similarly, they are more likely to be less stressed and feel loved a lot, as well as report that they have someone to take them to the doctor any time there is the need (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b).

A lower proportion of First Nations youth report being sexually active than other Canadian youth generally, although First Nations youth aged 12 to 14 are 8 percent to 9 percent more likely to be sexually active than their other Canadian peers. First Nations youth are, in the majority, using condoms (81%), although many fewer report using birth control pills (19.2%). Considerably more First Nations young males report condom use than their other Canadian peers. Approximately 4.5% of First Nations youth report having been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b).

Education

Physical well-being has been found to directly affect school education among First Nations youth. First Nations youth who rated their overall health as fair or poor are more likely not to attend school, not to like school, or to experience learning problems (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b: 160).

The factors underlying reduced school performance among First Nations youth are also found to be related to increased alcohol consumption, smoking, and sexual activity. Furthermore, over half (57.4%) of First Nations youth live in households with six or more people, mostly family. Those experiencing crowded conditions are more likely to report having repeated a grade.

Eating a nutritious diet, participating in sports, music groups, and traditional activities such as drumming and dancing, and engaging more frequently in physical activity are all good predictors of better school performance and attendance (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b: 167). While First Nations youth with one or both parents having attended residential schools are more likely to have learning difficulties or to repeat a grade, no such association has been found among those with grandparents who attended residential schools. This could indicate a generational decrease in the impacts of residential school attendance (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005b).

Recognizing the Potential

The rapid increase of the First Nations population means that thousands of First Nations youth will be entering the labour force in the next two decades. More than half of First Nations people living in their communities are under 25 years of age (HRSDC, 2005). According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) and the Aboriginal Population Census 2001, over 300,000 jobs will need to be created by 2016

for Aboriginal people just to accommodate the growth of the Aboriginal working-age population and close the gap in employment between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians.

Canada overall is facing a decline in its working age population and this will lead to a smaller labour force and increased risk of labour shortages. Besides recruiting skilled workers through immigration, another option for dealing with potential skill shortages is to improve labour force participation among groups that are under-represented in the labour market. The First Nations youth population is a unique resource that could meaningfully contribute to Canada's future prosperity and global competitiveness.

At the core of creating opportunities for First Nations is the need for a holistic, sustainable and long-term strategy to address their resiliency. Factors that have been found to contribute to enhancing the resiliency of First Nations youth and, therefore, protect youth from suicidal tendencies include:

- a strong sense of identity and self-worth; healthy and supportive families and communities; strong coping skills; knowledge of culture and language; a belief in one's ability to handle life's problems; and a positive view of the future. Activities aimed at resiliency will include developing and sharing culturally relevant training tools, and resources that foster resiliency; engaging youth in planning

- for suicide prevention; and supporting the development of Aboriginal youth leaders (Kelly, 2007: 70).

The RHS 2002-03 reveals the critical importance of providing First Nations youth with a basic standard of living equal to that enjoyed by most Canadian youth in order to enhance their educational attainment. This in turn would reduce their likelihood of engaging in at-risk behaviours such as suicidal ideation, increased alcohol consumption, and sexual activity. This basic standard would include a balanced and nutritious diet, opportunities for sport and cultural programs (including traditional drumming and dancing) and safe housing conditions. For instance, as stated in the RHS final report,

- health education programs that relate to the effects of increased alcohol consumption [smoking] and sexual activity on school performance need to be designed and implemented at an early age and grade... Encouragement of, and access to, active treatment for health conditions may produce a positive result relating to school performance (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 165).

In addition to providing opportunities for safe physical activity, food security and access to needed health services, First Nations youth must also have access to the professional and peer supports required to make informed decisions about their health and well-being in the future:

When First Nations youth are in need of assistance in dealing with problems they face, they most often turn to their parents or guardians, friends their own age, or no one at all. The proportion of youth who report having difficulties with their mental health is greater than those who appear to be accessing either Western-based mental health services or consulting with traditional healers. Therefore, service providers within communities are not getting an opportunity to provide help when it is most needed (Readin et al., 2007: 23).

Based on evidence reviewed, it is further recommended for youth social support that the focus of programming change to a more holistic and traditionally consistent pattern of fulfilling extended family and community roles. Additionally, communities should be supported to develop strategies that will improve the extent to which youth access these more broadly defined mental health services (Readin et al., 2007: 26).

Fundamentally, however, investing in First Nations youth also means investing in First Nations governments and communities. There is growing evidence of the relationship between enhanced self-esteem and resiliency of First Nations youth and First Nations measures of First Nations self-government or community control over services. Among First Nations youth in British Columbia, Chandler and Lalonde

have shown the correlation between lower rates of youth suicide within First Nations communities and higher levels of “cultural continuity”; that is, communities in which one or more of the following factors were present: self-government, land claims, control over educational systems, health services, police and fire services, and the availability of cultural facilities to members (See Chandler and Lalonde article in this volume).

The RHS 2002-03 reinforces these findings. For instance, it demonstrates that First Nations youth from communities not part of a health transfer agreement are more likely to report being in physical balance almost none of the time. Conversely, youth from communities that are part of a multi-community health transfer agreement are more likely to report being in spiritual balance all of the time (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 221). A correlation was also found between a higher number of First Nations youth who attend school in those communities that have negotiated a health transfer agreement (First Nations Information Governance Committee et al., 2005a: 163).

Creating the Opportunity to Dream

Briefly stated, the resiliency and leadership of First Nations youth in Canada is vital to the cultural continuity and self-determination of First Nations peoples. In 2003, the AFN Youth Council initiated the development and pilot of two youth training programs: CEPS (Cultural-Economic-Political-Social), directed at leadership

training, and the Young Eagles Challenge, focused on peer-to-peer training on sexual health (since evolved into the areas of suicide prevention and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)). Both innovative tools have received limited funding support for curriculum delivery since their pilot stages. Nevertheless, they remain potential vehicles for fostering national, regional and community-based First Nations youth leadership and peer support. Since 2005, a National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy totalling \$65 million over five years has also been implemented.

Notwithstanding these national initiatives, addressing the key determinants of First Nations youth health and well-being requires a comprehensive, long-term and sustainable approach to First Nations self-government and community development. Only then can their full potential be explored for the benefit of all First Nations and Canadians. As argued by the AFN in 2006, a successful approach to First Nations community development will require tackling the chronic under-funding of First Nations community budgets over the past decade, recognizing and implementing First Nations governments, and establishing mutually acceptable and effective relationships among First Nations and federal, provincial and territorial governments (AFN, 2006). Existing policies and programs are fragmented, generally under-funded and unable to respond to emerging issues that threaten youth resiliency and leadership. Such issues include criminal gang activity, crystal meth

and prescription drug addictions, loss of First Nations languages, etc.

Specific to the area of youth leadership, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples had recommended a national campaign to raise First Nations youth awareness of their opportunities to serve their Nations in the advent of self-government (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). RCAP suggested that a national Aboriginal youth policy should reach several key program areas: education, justice, health and healing, sports and recreation, and support for those living in urban centers. Such a national policy supporting First Nations youth initiatives has yet to be undertaken. While we have neglected to effectively invest in creating opportunities for the last generation of First Nations youth, we must remain inspired and driven to meet the needs of today's youth and of those generations to come.

Notes

- 1 AFN Youth Council. Cultural-Economic-Political-Social Youth Development Leadership Training. 2004. Unpublished.
- 2 The RHS is a survey undertaken by First Nations. It was self-administered to 4,983 youth, aged 12 to 17, between August 2002 and November 2003. The 2002-03 survey sample was designed to represent the First Nations population living in First Nations communities in all provinces and territories except Nunavut. Overall, 238 communities were included and 5.9% of the target population was surveyed. The sampling rate was 10% among youth.

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Strengthening Engagement Programming for Urban Aboriginal Youth

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Aboriginal youth represent one of the greatest demographic challenges facing policy-makers in Canada today. The statistics can be stated in a number of ways. However, the "three 50s" might have the greatest impact. According to the 2001 Census, 50 percent of Aboriginal people live in urban areas, 50 percent of all Aboriginal people are under the age of 25, and 50 percent of all Aboriginal people do not graduate from high school. Consider for a moment the significant and varied policy and programming implications that this raises. We need to have programs available to urban Aboriginal youth that are able to address the social issues raised by an under-educated and impoverished population.

The Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centre (UMAYC) Initiative is one of the few programs that currently exists across the country for addressing these particular challenges. Created in 1998 as a component of *Gathering Strength*, the federal government's response to the Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples, the UMAC Initiative seeks to improve the cultural, social, economic and personal prospects of urban Aboriginal youth, through culturally relevant projects focused on health, life skills and personal development. There are four separate partners and delivery structures for UMAC: the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC)¹, which delivers approximately \$10.5 million in programming across Canada; the Métis National Council, and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, each of which administers program-

ming for their respective communities; and finally, the Department of Canadian Heritage, which delivers UMAC programming directly in Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Edmonton, and Calgary. The total value of programming provided under this initiative through all of these partners is approximately \$25 million a year.

The UMAC represents a unique model of programming for Aboriginal youth in at least two ways. First, the initiative ensures that Aboriginal youth are engaged in all aspects of programming; from proposal evaluations, to program management and local activities. As project proposals are submitted, decisions on which programs to fund are made by committees of Aboriginal youth. These committees are composed of at least 50 percent youth from the regions where programming is being considered. These youth are empowered to review and evaluate programming proposals which may take place. In essence, youth are able to ensure that programming under this Initiative is meeting needs they understand only too well. In addition, youth are involved in the governance of every project funded by the Initiative. Once projects are approved, they must have a youth council which oversees the delivery of the project, and a youth must act as one of the signing authorities.

Second, as a key objective, the UMAC initiative seeks to continually remain relevant to the needs of local communities. By setting broad programming objectives and allowing local communities to devise their

own, often unique, programming responses, we are able to ensure that relevant programming is available. Across Canada, community organizations are able to come together and plan for the services and interventions that are required in their communities. This is essential as we try to understand the vast circumstances and experiences urban Aboriginal youth face. In Fort Smith, for example, Northwest Territories

the fact that UMACY is programming by youth, for youth.

Based on our observations, the approach espoused by the UMACY has yielded a number of positive outcomes for urban Aboriginal youth. When youth are engaged in programming, they are not involved in negative behaviours. Gym nights, camps, cultural workshops and the like take the place of other, less

them ownership of the programs and services provided, while keeping numerous youth off the streets and busy with cultural activities.

In Lillooet, British Columbia the Friendship Centre has developed a program model to address issues of social cohesion. In the past, community members in Lillooet have been vocal about Aboriginal youth “hanging out” on Main Street. In response, a UMACY project was developed to address this issue head on. A safe, culturally appropriate program is running which is bringing Aboriginal youth off the street, and into progressive programming. Last year, this program provided services to more than 500 youth. As a result, other agencies and levels of government are supporting this project through increased funds, providing workshops and increasing partnerships. Today, violence and vandalism are declining and the community is more coordinated and effective in its responses.

These projects are just two of more than a hundred nationally which are improving the quality of life for urban Aboriginal people.

This is the motivation behind UMACY: to support improvements to quality of life. For example, surely the ultimate programming success for UMACY would be contributing to more youth graduating from high school. Finishing high school leads directly to long-term positive outcomes, such as better employment prospects, higher income levels, better housing status, fewer contacts with the justice system, increased health status and many others.

When youth are engaged in programming, they are not involved in negative behaviours.

programming is developed using traditional culture and games to reach youth. From Vancouver to Halifax, urban Aboriginal youth and youth-serving organizations are able to shape programming which will have the maximum impact for youth in their community.

Using this process, the NAFC has been able to have a tremendous impact across the country. In the first six years of the program, more than 325,000 participants have accessed programming through NAFC administered projects. Each year an average of 100 projects across the country take place in all categories of eligible projects. For 2006 alone, more than 69,000 youth accessed UMACY programming through the NAFC process. This represents a significant number of urban Aboriginal people accessing timely and relevant programming. In essence, the success of the program can be attributed to

positive pursuits. There are arguably downstream impacts as well, as it is believed that youth who consistently access culture-based programming may become better equipped to succeed academically and in the labour market.

Where funding is available, the impact on Aboriginal youth is dramatic and demonstrable. Ma-mow-we-tek Friendship Centre in Thompson, Manitoba has used the funding from the UMACY Initiative to operate a successful Youth Justice program. The program offers recreational, educational and cultural programming and referrals for specialized services outside the Centre. Averaging 25-30 youths per night, the program is open to all youth in Thompson. An employment worker helps teenagers begin contemplating their future careers, a street-involved youth worker targets those youth called “couch drifters” and an Elder provides drug and alcohol counselling. The Youth Council engages in its own fundraising program giving

Another example is the importance of providing quality supports for single mothers: in this instance, the benefits of the program are multiplied, as mother and child are helped.

This makes it all the more surprising that more programming options do not exist for urban Aboriginal youth. There is still a significant lack of programming and policy supports for this critical demographic group. Outside of UMAC there are no programming supports available. The federal government is involved in a number of critical and effective early years programs: the Aboriginal Head Start Program, Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program and Community Action Plan for Children all provide extensive and effective programming for Aboriginal Children aged zero (pre-natal) to six. However, there is no programming available for the ages of seven to thirteen. Outside of justice and alcohol and drug programs there are no programming options for Aboriginal children after age six.

Conclusion

From our vantage point as urban Aboriginal service providers, the UMAC initiative has been a great success. However, the ability of the program to reach young Aboriginal Canadians is limited, in terms of operational parameters (projects funded on a yearly basis, inhibiting momentum), regional coverage (funding allocated on a regional basis rather than to discrete communities, meaning large cities such as Toronto, Montréal, Halifax and others have not benefited from targeted initiatives) and demographic scope (UMAC programs limited to youth aged 12 and older, leaving the 7-12 age group uncovered). More young people, in more places and more age categories, would benefit were these limitations addressed. Based on our experience working with Aboriginal youth in urban areas, programs like the UMAC initiative leave an enduring legacy in terms of the quality services provided to and experienced by

young Aboriginal Canadians. Given that so many Aboriginal Canadians are urban-based, poor, and under 25 years of age, there is a clear impetus for governments and community stakeholders to act to ensure these young people have the opportunity to take their rightful place in Canadian society. The question is, are we ready to do what it takes?

Note

- 1 The NAFC delivers UMAC programming in nine identified regions across Canada. Specific regional processes are conducted in: Vancouver; British Columbia (excluding Vancouver); the North (Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut); Alberta; Saskatchewan; Manitoba; Ontario; Quebec; and the East (Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island).

Housing Need and Residential Mobility among Urban Aboriginal Children and Youth

Stewart Clatworthy

Four Directions Project Consultants

A substantial body of research exists on the mobility patterns of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Much of this research, however, focuses on one dimension of mobility: migrating or moving between communities.¹ Residential mobility or changing residence within the same community represents another dimension of mobility that has not been explored to any great extent within the context of Canada's Aboriginal population. This latter dimension of mobility is important, as it constitutes the major process through which households and individuals adjust their housing situations in response to changes in needs and resources.

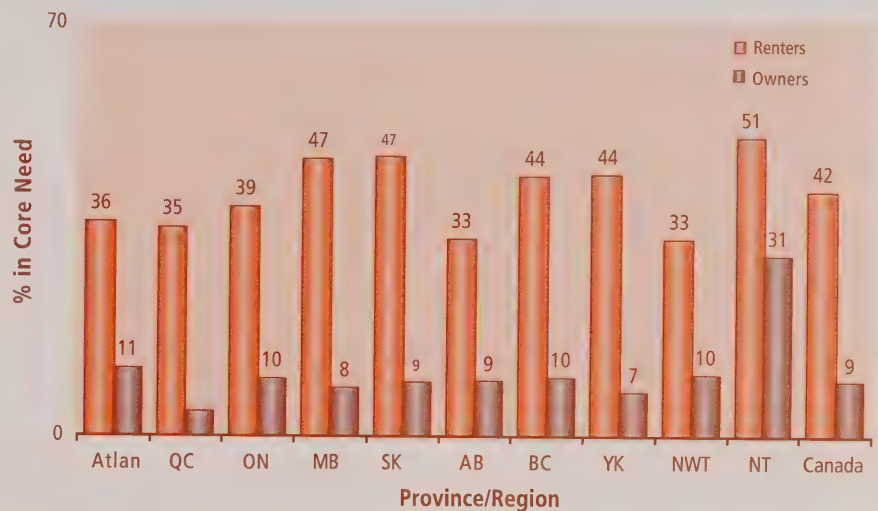
Several studies over the past two decades documented the housing

difficulties experienced by urban Aboriginal populations (Clatworthy and Stevens, 1987; Spector, 1996). Little of this research, however, examined the housing circumstances of movers and non-movers and the extent to which residential moves result in acceptable housing situations.

This paper presents results from a broader research effort exploring the housing circumstances and needs of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.² It focuses on the housing needs and residential mobility rates of Aboriginal children (0-14 years of age) and youth (15-29 years of age) living off reserve in urban areas. Housing outcomes and other implications associated with residential moves by members of this segment of the urban

FIGURE 1

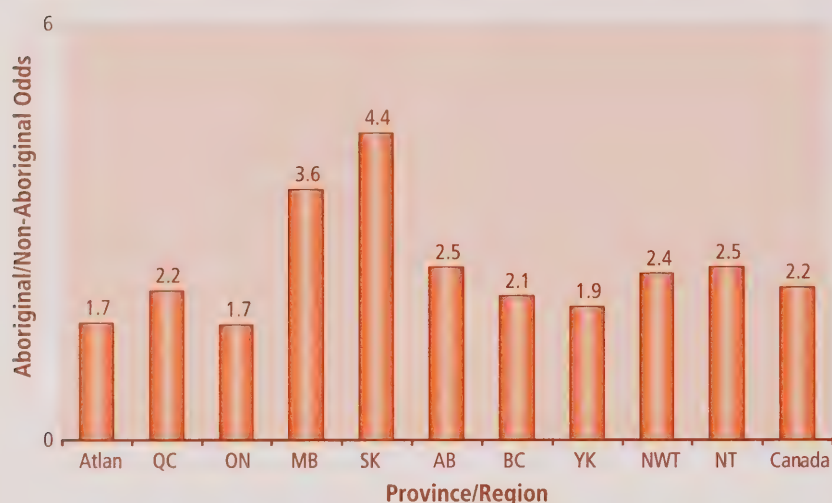
Proportion of Urban Aboriginal Children and Youth Experiencing Core Housing Need by Tenure and Province/Region, Canada, 2001



Source: Custom tabulations from the 2001 Census of Canada.

FIGURE 2

Relative (Aboriginal versus Non-Aboriginal) Odds of Children and Youth Experiencing Core Housing Need, by Province/Region, Canada, 2001



Source: Custom tabulations from the 2001 Census of Canada.

Aboriginal population are also highlighted. The research is based on data from the 2001 Census of Canada.³

Housing Needs of Urban Aboriginal Children and Youth

In Canada, housing needs (or consumption deficiencies) are commonly discussed in relation to three consumption standards: affordability, quality, and adequacy. However, the existence of housing consumption deficiencies should not necessarily be viewed as reflecting housing consumption problems. For example, some households that do not meet the adequacy standard may be able to acquire larger housing that is suitable for their needs without exceeding the affordability standard. To measure housing consumption

problems, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation developed the concept of “core” housing need. A household is deemed to experience core housing need if it fails to meet one or more of the consumption standards and its income is lower than that needed to obtain a dwelling unit that meets all three standards in the local marketplace.

Estimates of core housing need for the population of Aboriginal children and youth living in urban areas are presented in Figure 1. At the national level, 71,750, or roughly 30 percent, of all urban Aboriginal children and youth experienced core housing need in 2001. The prevalence of core housing need, however, varied sharply by tenure group and was roughly five times more common among those living in rental (42%) as opposed to

owner-occupied (9%) dwelling units. The figure also reveals large regional variations, especially among those living in rental accommodations: core housing need was more common among urban Aboriginal children and youth in Nunavut, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Yukon.

The differentials in core housing need among urban Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children and youth are presented in Figure 2 in the form of odds-ratios.⁴ The ratios reveal that the prevalence of core housing need was sharply higher among Aboriginal children and youth in all provinces/regions compared to non-Aboriginal children and youth. At the national level, Aboriginal children and youth living in urban areas were roughly 2.2 times more likely to experience core housing need than their non-Aboriginal counterparts; in urban areas in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the prevalence of core housing need among Aboriginal children and youth was at least 3.6 times higher than among non-Aboriginal children and youth.

The high levels of core housing need experienced by urban Aboriginal children and youth result, to a large extent, from low household and family incomes. Among children and youth residing in households experiencing core housing need, 84 percent had problems with housing affordability, 29 percent experienced problems with housing adequacy (overcrowding), and 23 percent reported housing quality (condition) issues. Thirty-six percent experienced multiple consumption deficiencies.

Residential Mobility among Urban Aboriginal Children and Youth

As shown in Table 1, the residential mobility rate for the combined population of urban Aboriginal children and youth was 264.3 per 1,000 during the 2000-2001 period, a rate roughly 1.9 times higher than that of non-Aboriginal children and youth. Residential mobility was more common among Aboriginal youth than children and much more common among registered Indian children and youth than for other Aboriginal groups.

TABLE 1

Annual Rate of Residential Mobility (per 1,000 Population) among Urban Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Children and Youth by Aboriginal Group, Canada, 2000-2001

Population Group	Age Group		
	Children	Youth	Children and Youth
Registered Indian	258.7	340.9	295.7
Non-Registered Indian	211.0	289.7	245.2
Métis	191.5	285.9	237.3
Inuit	188.4	259.5	218.4
Aboriginal	225.4	310.0	264.3
Non-Aboriginal	98.5	172.7	137.1
Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal	2.3	1.8	1.9

Source: Custom tabulations from the 2001 Census of Canada.

TABLE 2

Annual Rate of Residential Mobility (per 1,000 Households) among Urban Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Households Maintained by Youth and Families with Children by Tenure, Canada, 2000-2001

Population Group	Youth (15-29 years) Maintainer			All Families with Children	Youth Households and Families with Children
	Non-Families	Childless Couples	Families with Children		
Renter Mobility Rate					
Aboriginal	541.0	494.5	421.6	298.7	350.6
Non-Aboriginal	427.0	377.5	336.4	187.5	261.4
Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.6	1.3
Owner Mobility Rate					
Aboriginal	326.2	274.9	210.	84.8	101.4
Non-Aboriginal	280.1	268.1	165.4	57.7	71.4
Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal	1.2	1.0	381.3	1.5	1.4
Combined Tenure Mobility Rate					
Aboriginal	514.5	398.4	381.3	203.0	251.2
Non-Aboriginal	404.0	289.6	272.5	96.0	141.1
Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal	1.3	1.4	1.4	2.1	1.8
Homeownership Rate (%)					
Aboriginal	12.4	26.6	30.2	59.4	40.2
Non-Aboriginal	15.7	37.4	50.5	79.5	63.0
Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6

Source: Custom tabulations from the 2001 Census of Canada.

TABLE 3

Prevalence of Core Housing Need among Urban Aboriginal Families with Children Who Rent Accommodation by Residential Mobility Status and Province/Region, Canada, 2001

Province/Region	% in Core Need		Mover/Non-Mover
	Non-Movers	Movers	
Atlantic Region	35.0	44.8	1.3
Quebec	27.7	39.8	1.4
Ontario	38.5	47.4	1.2
Manitoba	47.1	53.5	1.1
Saskatchewan	43.6	56.7	1.3
Alberta	34.8	39.0	1.1
British Columbia	45.2	55.7	1.2
Yukon	42.2	42.9	1.0
Northwest Territories	32.1	35.5	1.1
Nunavut	50.0	44.1	0.9
Canada	40.5	49.6	1.2

Source: Custom tabulations from the 2001 Census of Canada.

Table 2 provides more detailed information concerning the mobility patterns of urban Aboriginal children and youth. The table displays estimates of residential mobility rates for households and families maintained by Aboriginal youth and for all Aboriginal families and children.⁵ It reveals that more than one quarter of these urban Aboriginal households moved between 2000 and 2001, a level of movement roughly 1.8 times higher than that of their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Residential mobility rates were especially high among households and families maintained by Aboriginal youth.

The importance of tenure is indicated by the much higher rates of residential mobility displayed among urban Aboriginal households renting accommodation.⁶ Among childless households maintained by Aboriginal

youth (i.e., non-families and childless couples), residential mobility rates were roughly 1.8 times higher among renters than homeowners. Among families with children, residential mobility rates among renters were between 2.0 and 3.5 times higher than among homeowners. Similar differences in residential mobility rates existed among non-Aboriginal renters and homeowners.

Housing Quality and Residential Mobility

Even though much of the higher rate of residential mobility recorded for Aboriginal as opposed to non-Aboriginal households and families appears to be associated with tenure differences, the residential mobility rates of young Aboriginal households and families with children exceeded those of their non-Aboriginal counter-

parts among both renters and homeowners. Accordingly, factors other than tenure must also contribute to higher rates of Aboriginal residential mobility.

Although Aboriginal studies focusing on the reasons for residential moves are scarce, data collected by the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey identified efforts to improve housing situations as the most frequently cited reasons for moving (Clatworthy, 1996). This finding, in combination with the high levels of core housing need shown above, suggests that the high rates of residential mobility which characterize urban Aboriginal children and youth flow from inadequate housing situations.

As noted previously, moving is generally viewed as an opportunity for households and families to bring housing consumption more in line with needs and resources. This raises an important question: To what extent does residential mobility among urban Aboriginal children and youth result in acceptable housing situations? This question can be addressed by comparing the prevalence of core housing need among comparable households who move (movers) and do not move (i.e., non-movers). The results of this analysis, summarized in Table 3 for urban Aboriginal families with children who were renting accommodation indicate that recent movers experienced higher rates of core housing need than non-movers in all provinces/regions except Nunavut. At the national level, roughly one half of renting families with children who moved experienced core housing need, a rate roughly 1.2 times higher than that of non-movers. Results for

other types of Aboriginal households revealed a similar pattern of higher rates of core housing need among movers. These findings, which were also identified in research based on 1991 data (Clatworthy, 1996), suggest that for a large segment of urban Aboriginal children and youth, residential moves do not result in acceptable housing situations. In light of the housing outcomes of movers, the high levels of mobility among urban Aboriginal children and youth are a concern and suggest that frequent mobility may constitute an additional dimension of the housing difficulties experienced by urban Aboriginal peoples.

Discussion and Implications

The finding that, for many young urban Aboriginal families, residential moves are not leading to improved housing situations, raises important issues for researchers and policy-makers about the housing experiences of urban Aboriginal children. First, housing difficulties among Aboriginal families are correlated with low incomes that can limit the housing opportunities available. Many families may be facing untenable choices, between dwellings of poor quality and/or insufficient size, or units that are unaffordable. It is this situation that appears to contribute to frequent changes in residence, as Aboriginal households and families seek to improve their housing situations; however the process of moving does not necessarily result in acceptable levels of housing consumption.⁷ The outcome for the children of these families is a cycle of upheaval and poor quality housing that is compounded by other factors associated with living in poverty.

Although research concerning the consequences and implications of high levels of mobility among urban Aboriginal peoples remains poorly developed, a growing body of literature suggests that frequent moves, in certain contexts, are associated with detrimental outcomes for children, including Aboriginal children. A recent study (Clatworthy, 2000) identified annual student turnover rates at schools located in inner-city Winnipeg neighbourhoods with the Aboriginal population exceeding 50 percent, more than twice the inner-city average. At some of these schools, turnover rates approached 100 percent. Although this research did not attempt to establish the consequences of school changes on education outcomes, two other recent studies have found a significant correlation between student mobility and school outcomes. A US-based study, reported by the Government Accounting Office (1994), found that among American third graders who changed schools frequently, 41 percent of them were below the grade level in reading, compared to only 26 percent of third graders who never changed schools. The Government Accounting Office also found that frequent school changes were associated with poor math scores and reported behavioural problems.

A recent Canadian study by Aman (2006), concerning the impacts of mobility and school relocations on high school completion rates among youth (including Aboriginal youth) in British Columbia, produced remarkably similar findings, in terms of the link between high student mobility and poor school outcomes (See also Aman and Ungerleider in this volume). Among students who

relocated schools, the high school completion rate was roughly one half that of students who did not change schools.

Perhaps most importantly, evidence regarding the negative impacts of frequent mobility, whether due to school change or residential moves, raises concerns of an intergenerational cycle, as low levels of education attainment likely translate into low incomes in adulthood, which in turn leaves people at higher risk of housing consumption problems. Given this risk, interventions to address the drivers of high residential mobility among young urban Aboriginal families, including factors pertaining to the housing supply as well as those related to poverty, need to be seriously considered.⁸

Notes

- 1 Recent migration research (Clatworthy and Norris, 2007) has shown that the Aboriginal population moves to and from urban areas at a rate roughly 1.5 times higher than that of the non-Aboriginal population.
- 2 The material presented in this paper draws on results from ongoing research sponsored by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation into the housing conditions and needs of Canada's Aboriginal populations living on and off reserves. Data presented in this study for the Aboriginal population include those who reported Aboriginal identity (i.e., North American Indian, Métis, Inuit), Indian registration, or band membership.
- 3 The residential mobility rates in this study are annual rates and are measured for the one-year period preceding the 2001 Census of Canada. These rates are calculated for the non-migrant population (i.e., those who resided in the same community in both 2000 and 2001).
- 4 The odds-ratio measures the likelihood of an event (e.g., experiencing core housing need) occurring among a specific population group (e.g., Aboriginal) in

relation to that of another population group (non-Aboriginal). A ratio equal to 1 indicates that the event occurs at the same rate among both groups. As used in this context, a ratio of 2 indicates that the event occurs twice as often among the Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal population.

- 5 Household-level mobility rates are defined on the basis of the residential mobility status of the household main-tainer. Most residential moves, especially those involving married couples and families, generally involve all members of the household/family.
- 6 Tenure has been identified as a causal factor in residential mobility. This results from differentials in the costs of moving incurred by owners and renters. Those who own their home generally confront higher moving costs associated with expenses (e.g., real estate brokerage and legal fees) related to the sale or purchase of the dwelling unit.
- 7 While evidence suggests that many of those who move do not acquire acceptable dwelling units, moves may result in housing consumption improvements or improvements in other aspects of housing consumption, including better neighbourhoods, and improved access to work or schools. These issues cannot be adequately addressed within the context of census data.
- 8 Frequent mobility may contribute to other difficulties for Aboriginal children and youth, as some research suggests that high levels of mobility may also hamper socialization and reduce social cohesion. Frequent mobility may also negatively affect continuity in the provision of services to high-need families.

Full references are available in the online version of this issue. It can be accessed by visiting the PRI web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>

Aboriginal Data: Opportunities for Future Research and Analysis

The articles contained in this volume were written in the period just prior to the roll-out of new sources of Aboriginal data. Data to be released during 2008 will present new opportunities to further explore research questions raised by contributors to this issue of *Horizons*.

Census Data

The 2006 Census offers a wide range of data tabulations on various topics. Demographic and socio-economic data on the Aboriginal populations of Canada are being rolled out between January and May of 2008. In January 2008, Statistics Canada published a first analysis of demographic data in an online document entitled *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada in 2006: Inuit, Métis and First Nations* <<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/aboriginal/index.cfm>>, 2006 Census <<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/aboriginal/index.cfm>>. Further analysis will be possible following other 2006 Census major releases.

Post-Censal Surveys

Statistics Canada, in collaboration with Aboriginal advisors from across the country, National Aboriginal Organizations and federal partners, has conducted two surveys involving the Aboriginal population living off-reserve: the 2006 Aboriginal Children's Survey (ACS) and Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS).

The ACS is a national survey of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children under the age of 6 that collects information on their development and well-being. The APS provides data on the social and economic conditions of children and youth aged 6 to 14 and for adults aged 15 and over for all Aboriginal groups across Canada. Data from both surveys are expected to be available to the public in the fall of 2008.

Labour Force Survey

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) provides monthly information on the labour market outcomes of off-reserve Aboriginal peoples.

Since January of 2007, Aboriginal identity questions in the LFS are now asked for all provinces; prior to that date data was only collected for select regions, notably western Canada. At present, only data for western Canada is available. However, national data should be available sometime in the fall of 2008. Visit Statistics Canada's web site at <www.statcan.ca> for more information about these products.

(p. ex., les Autochtones) par rapport à un autre groupe (les non-Autochtones). Un ratio de un indique que l'événement se produit dans la même mesure au sein de deux groupes. Un ratio de deux indique que l'événement se produit deux fois plus souvent chez les Autochtones que chez les non-Autochtones.

5 Le taux de mobilité des ménages est défini selon le statut de mobilité résidentielle du soutien de famille. La majorité des déménagements, notamment chez les couples mariés et les familles, concernent en général tous les membres du ménage.

6 Il a été établi que le statut d'occupation était un facteur causal de la mobilité résidentielle. Comparés aux locataires, les propriétaires ont des coûts de déménagement plus élevés rattachés aux frais (p. ex., les frais de courtage et juridiques) à la vente ou à l'achat d'une unité de logement.

7 Bien que les données semblent indiquer que de nombreuses familles qui déménagent n'acquiescent pas un logement acceptable, les déménagements sont susceptibles d'améliorer divers aspects de la consommation en logement (quartiers plus favorisés et une accessibilité accrue au travail et aux écoles). Il est impossible d'examiner à fond ces questions avec les données de recensement.

8 La mobilité peut contribuer à d'autres problèmes chez les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones. En effet, certaines recherches suggèrent qu'un taux de mobilité élevé peut aussi nuire à la socialisation et diminuer la cohésion sociale. La mobilité peut également nuire à la continuité des services offerts aux familles dans le besoin.

Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du PRP à <www.recherchehepolithique.gc.ca>

Données sur les Autochtones : Perspectives de recherches et d'analyses futures

Les articles du présent numéro ont été écrits tout juste avant la diffusion de nouvelles sources de données sur les Autochtones. Les données qui seront rendues publiques en 2008 ouvriront de nouvelles possibilités de recherche sur les questions soulevées dans ce numéro d'*Horizons*.

Recensement

Le Recensement de 2006 offre un large éventail de tableaux de données sur divers thèmes. Des données démographiques et socioéconomiques sur les peuples autochtones du Canada seront rendues publiques de janvier à mai 2008. En janvier 2008, Statistique Canada a diffusé en ligne sa première analyse des données démographiques, *Peuples autochtones du Canada en 2006 : Inuits, Métis et Premières nations, Recensement de 2006* <<http://www12.statcan.ca/francais/census06/analyses/aboriginal/index.cfm>>. D'autres analyses seront possibles avec les prochaines diffusions du Recensement de 2006.

Enquêtes postcensitaires

Statistique Canada, en collaboration avec des conseillers autochtones de partout au pays, ainsi que de concert avec des organismes autochtones nationaux et des partenaires fédéraux, a réalisé deux enquêtes auprès de la population autochtone vivant hors réserve : l'Enquête sur les enfants de 2006.

L'EFA est une enquête nationale sur les enfants des membres des Premières nations, les enfants inuits et les enfants métis de moins de 6 ans, qui permet de recueillir des données sur leur développement et leur bien-être. L'EAPA fournit des données sur les conditions socioéconomiques des enfants et des jeunes de 6 à 14 ans ainsi que des adultes de 15 ans et plus dans tous les groupes autochtones du Canada. On s'attend à ce que les données de l'EAPA et de l'EAPA soient diffusées à l'automne 2008.

Enquête sur la population active

L'Enquête sur la population active (EPA) permet de recueillir chaque mois des renseignements sur la situation sur le marché du travail des Autochtones hors réserve.

Depuis janvier 2007, dans le cadre de l'EPA, des questions sur l'identité autochtone sont posées dans toutes les provinces. Auparavant, elles ne l'étaient que dans certaines régions, notamment l'Ouest canadien, et pour l'instant, seules des données pour cette région sont disponibles. Toutefois, des données nationales devaient être diffusées à l'automne 2008. Pour obtenir plus de renseignements sur ces produits, visitez le site web de Statistique Canada à l'adresse <www.statcan.ca>.

sont confirmés dans une étude empirique réalisée en 1991 (Clatworthy, 1996) et semblent indiquer que pour un segment important des enfants et des jeunes Autochtones urbains, les déménagements ne mènent pas à des conditions de logement acceptables. Par conséquent, il est permis de croire que le taux de mobilité élevé chez les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones urbains est préoccupant suggérant qu'une grande mobilité constitue une autre dimension des problèmes de logement que connaissent les peuples autochtones.

Analyse et conséquences

Cette conclusion soulève d'importantes questions pour les chercheurs et les décideurs quant aux expériences de logement des enfants Autochtones urbains. Premièrement, les problèmes de logement des familles autochtones sont corréls à un revenu faible limitant les options de logement. Beaucoup de familles font ainsi face à des choix difficiles, entre des logements de moindre qualité et (ou) trop petits ou trop coûteux. En revanche, cette situation semble contribuer aux changements fréquents de résidence chez les ménages autochtones qui cherchent à améliorer leurs conditions de logement. Cependant, ces déménagements n'entraînent pas nécessairement des niveaux acceptables de logement⁷. Pour les enfants de ces familles, cela se solde par un cycle de bouleversements et de logements de moindre qualité, aggravé par d'autres facteurs liés à la pauvreté. Bien qu'il n'existe pas d'abondantes recherches sur les conséquences du taux de mobilité chez les Autochtones en milieu urbain, de plus en plus de publications suggèrent qu'il y aurait un lien, dans certaines situations, entre les déménagements fréquents

et des issues défavorables chez les enfants, notamment des Autochtones. Selon une étude récente (Clatworthy, 2000), la mobilité des étudiants dans les écoles des quartiers centraux de Winnipeg dont plus de la moitié de la population est autochtone est deux fois plus élevée que le taux moyen retrouvé dans les quartiers centraux. Dans certaines de ces écoles, la mobilité avoisine les 100 %. Bien que cette recherche ne prétend pas établir une certaine causalité entre les changements d'école et les résultats scolaires, deux autres études récentes établissent un lien entre la mobilité étudiante et les résultats scolaires. Selon une étude du Government Accounting Office (1994) menée aux États-Unis, parmi les élèves américains de troisième année qui changeaient fréquemment d'école, 41 % se classaient sous le niveau scolaire en lecture, comparativement à 26 % chez les élèves qui n'avaient jamais changé d'école. Le Government Accounting Office a également établi une relation entre les faibles résultats en mathématiques et les problèmes comportementaux et les changements fréquents d'école. Une étude canadienne menée récemment par Aman (Voir son article co-écrit avec Ungertler dans ce numéro) sur les impacts de la mobilité et du changement d'école sur le taux d'obtention d'un diplôme d'études secondaires chez les jeunes (y compris les Autochtones) en Colombie-Britannique est arrivée aux mêmes hypothèses en ce qui concerne le lien entre la mobilité étudiante et de faibles résultats scolaires. Le taux d'obtention d'un diplôme chez les élèves qui n'avaient pas changé d'école était environ deux fois plus élevé que chez les élèves qui avaient connu un changement.

Notes

- 1 Selon une recherche récente (Clatworthy et Norris, 2007), le taux de déménagement de la population autochtone, en provenance des régions urbaines ou vers celles-ci, est environ 1,5 fois plus élevé que celui de la population non autochtone.
- 2 Les données présentées dans ce document s'appuient sur les résultats de la recherche en cours financée par Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada et la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement sur les conditions et les besoins de logement de la population autochtone du Canada vivant dans les réserves et hors réserve. Les données présentées dans le cadre de cette étude comprennent les personnes qui se sont identifiées en tant qu'Autochtone (c.-à-d., Indien nord-américain, Métis, Inuit), Indien inscrit ou membre d'une bande.
- 3 Cette étude présente les taux annuels de mobilité résidentielle pour la période d'un an précédant le recensement du Canada de 2001. Ces taux sont calculés pour la population non migrante (c.-à-d., les personnes résidant dans la même collectivité en 2000 et 2001).
- 4 Le rapport de cotes mesure la probabilité d'un événement (p. ex., avoir un besoin impérieux de logement) au sein d'un groupe particulier de la population

Prévalence du besoin impérieux de logement chez les jeunes familles autochtones urbaines avec enfants louant un logement, par statut de mobilité résidentielle et par province/région, Canada, 2001

Province/région	% ayant un besoin impérieux de logement	Familles qui	Familles qui ne	déménagent / ne déménagent pas
		Familles qui déménagent	déménagent	

Région de l'Atlantique	35,0	44,8	1,3
Québec	27,7	39,8	1,4
Ontario	38,5	47,4	1,2
Manitoba	47,1	53,5	1,1
Saskatchewan	43,6	56,7	1,3
Alberta	34,8	39,0	1,1
Colombie-Britannique	45,2	55,7	1,2
Yukon	42,2	42,9	1,0
Territoires du Nord-Ouest	32,1	35,5	1,1
Nunavut	50,0	44,1	0,9
Canada	40,5	49,6	1,2

Source : Totalisations spéciales du Recensement du Canada de 2001.

La qualité du logement et la mobilité résidentielle

Bien que le taux élevé de mobilité résidentielle enregistrée chez les ménages autochtones comparativement aux ménages non autochtones semble être lié en grande partie au statut d'occupation, le taux de mobilité résidentielle des jeunes ménages autochtones avec enfants dépassait celui des non autochtones autant chez les locataires que chez les propriétaires. Par conséquent, il est plausible que d'autres facteurs que le statut d'occupation contribuent à ce taux élevé. Peu d'études examinent les raisons des déménagements résidentiels. Cependant, la raison invoquée

taux environ 1,8 fois plus élevé que chez les non-Autochtones. Le taux de mobilité résidentielle des ménages entretenus par de jeunes Autochtones était particulièrement élevé. Le taux très élevé de mobilité résidentielle des ménages autochtones urbains locataires montre l'importance du statut d'occupation⁶. Chez les ménages sans enfants tenus par de jeunes Autochtones (c.-à-d., les personnes seules ou les couples sans enfants), le taux de mobilité résidentielle des locataires était 1,8 fois plus élevé que celui des propriétaires (de 2 à 3,5 fois plus élevé dans le cas des familles avec enfants). Les différences étaient similaires entre les locataires et les propriétaires non autochtones.

le plus souvent dans le cadre de l'Enquête auprès des peuples autochtones de 1991 était la volonté d'améliorer les conditions de logement (Clatworthy, 1996). Cette constatation, conjuguée au taux élevé de besoin impérieux de logement indiqué ci-dessus, nous permet de faire l'hypothèse selon laquelle le taux élevé de mobilité résidentielle chez les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones urbains découle de conditions de logement inadéquates. Comme il a été mentionné, un déménagement est généralement considéré comme une occasion pour les ménages de mieux faire concorder leur consommation en matière de logement avec leurs besoins et leurs ressources. Ceci soulève une question importante : dans quelle mesure la mobilité résidentielle chez les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones résulte-t-elle en conditions de logement acceptables? On peut examiner cette question en comparant la prévalence du besoin impérieux de logement chez les ménages qui déménagent et ceux qui ne déménagent pas. Les résultats de l'analyse des familles autochtones urbaines avec enfants qui louaient leur logement, résumés dans le tableau 3, indiquent que dans toutes les provinces/régions à l'exception du Nunavut, le taux en besoin impérieux de logement était plus élevé chez les familles qui avaient déménagé récemment que chez celles qui n'avaient pas déménagé. À l'échelle nationale, à peu près la moitié des familles locataires avec enfants qui avaient déménagé avaient un besoin impérieux de logement, un taux environ 1,2 fois plus élevé que celui des familles n'ayant pas déménagé. Les résultats pour d'autres types de ménages autochtones indiquent une tendance similaire. Ces résultats

jeunes Autochtones urbains était de 264,3 par 1 000 habitants, environ 1,9 fois plus élevée que chez les non-Autochtones. La mobilité résidentielle était plus fréquente chez les jeunes que chez les enfants autochtones et beaucoup plus chez les enfants et les jeunes Indiens inscrits que chez les jeunes Autochtones inscrits.

Le tableau 2 donne plus de détails sur les tendances concernant la mobilité des enfants et des jeunes Autochtones urbains et présente des estimations des taux de mobilité résidentielle des ménages tenus par des jeunes Autochtones et de toutes les familles autochtones avec enfants⁵. Il apparaît que plus du quart de ces ménages ont déménagé entre 2000 et 2001, soit un

TABLÉAU 1
Taux annuel de mobilité résidentielle (par 1 000 habitants) chez les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones et non-Autochtones urbains, par groupe autochtone, Canada, 2000-2001

Groupe d'âge	Groupe de population	
	Enfants	Jeunes
Indiens inscrits	258,7	340,9
Indiens non inscrits	211,0	289,7
Métis	191,5	285,9
Inuits	188,4	259,5
Autochtones	225,4	310,0
Non-Autochtones	98,5	172,7
Autochtones/non-Autochtones	2,3	1,8
		1,9

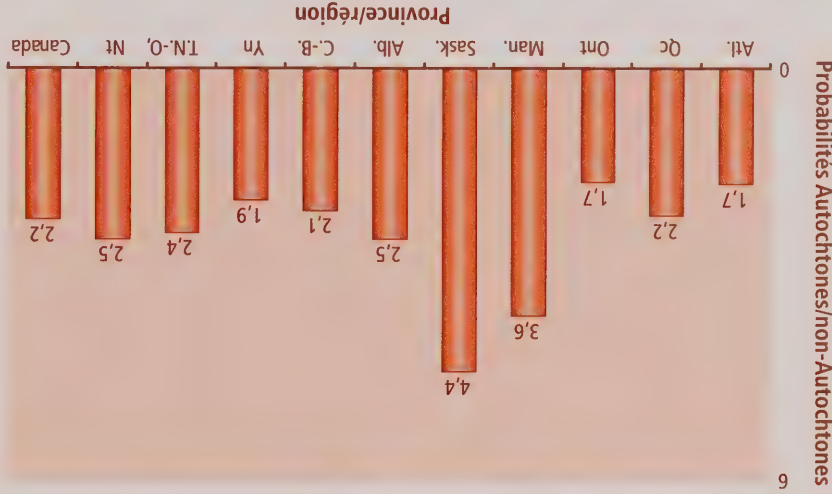
Source : Totalisations spéciales du Recensement du Canada de 2001.

TABLÉAU 2
Taux annuel de mobilité résidentielle (par 1 000 ménages) chez les ménages autochtones et non autochtones urbains entretenus par des jeunes et chez les familles avec enfants, par statut d'occupation, Canada, 2000-2001

Groupes de population	Jeunes soutiens de famille (15 à 29 ans)			
	Vivant seuls	Couples sans enfant	Familles avec enfants	Toutes les familles avec enfants
Autochtones	541,0	494,5	421,6	298,7
Non-Autochtones	427,0	377,5	336,4	187,5
Autochtones/non-Autochtones	1,3	1,3	1,3	1,6
Autochtones	326,2	274,9	210,5	84,8
Non-Autochtones	280,1	268,1	165,4	57,7
Autochtones/non-Autochtones	1,2	1,0	381,3	1,5
Autochtones	514,5	398,4	381,3	203,0
Non-Autochtones	404,0	289,6	272,5	96,0
Autochtones/non-Autochtones	1,3	1,4	1,4	2,1
Autochtones	12,4	26,6	30,2	59,4
Non-Autochtones	15,7	37,4	50,5	79,5
Autochtones/non-Autochtones	0,8	0,7	0,6	0,7
Autochtones	12,4	26,6	30,2	59,4
Non-Autochtones	15,7	37,4	50,5	79,5
Autochtones/non-Autochtones	0,8	0,7	0,6	0,7

Source : Totalisations spéciales du Recensement du Canada de 2001.

FIGURE 2
Probabilités d'un besoin impérieux de logement (Autochtones par rapport à non-Autochtones), par province/région, Canada, 2001



Source : Totalisations spéciales du Recensement du Canada de 2001.

logement et les autres conséquences liées aux déménagements pour ce segment de la population. La recherche s'appuie sur les données du recensement du Canada de 2001³. Au Canada, les besoins en logement (ou les déficits de consommation) sont généralement examinés en fonction de trois critères : le coût, la qualité et l'adéquation entre l'offre et les besoins. Cependant, il ne faudrait pas croire que les déficiences en matière de logement se traduisent nécessairement en problèmes du point de vue de la consommation. Par exemple, certains ménages dont le logement n'est pas adéquat pourraient acquérir un plus grand logement tout

Les besoins en logement des enfants et des jeunes Autochtones en milieu urbains

en respectant le critère de coût. Afin de mesurer les problèmes de consommation en matière de logement, la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement a élaboré le concept de besoin « impérieux » de logement. On juge qu'un ménage a un besoin impérieux de logement s'il ne répond pas à au moins un des trois critères et si son revenu ne lui permet pas d'obtenir sur le marché local un logement qui satisfait aux trois critères. La figure 1 présente des estimations de besoin impérieux de logement chez les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones en milieu urbains. À l'échelle nationale, plus ou moins 30 % de cette population (71 750 personnes) a connu un besoin impérieux de logement en 2001. Cependant, la prévalence de cette situation variait nettement selon le statut d'occupation et était cinq fois plus élevée chez les locataires (42 %) que chez les proprié-

non-Autochtones. Le taux élevé de besoin impérieux de logement des enfants et des jeunes Autochtones urbains est dû en grande partie au faible revenu des ménages. Chez les enfants et les jeunes vivant dans les ménages se trouvant dans cette situation, 84 % connaissaient des problèmes liés aux coûts, 29 % des problèmes concernant le caractère adéquat du logement (surpeuplement) et 23 % des problèmes de qualité (conditions), tandis que 36 % présentaient des problèmes multiples. Comme l'indique le tableau 1, en 2000-2001, le taux de mobilité résidentielle des enfants et des

La mobilité résidentielle chez les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones urbains

taires (9 %). La figure montre également des variations régionales importantes, notamment chez les locataires : le besoin impérieux de logement était plus répandu parmi les enfants et les jeunes au Nunavut, au Manitoba, en Saskatchewan, en Colombie-Britannique et au Yukon.

La figure 2 présente les différences en besoin impérieux de logement entre les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones et les non-Autochtones que chez les non-Autochtones. À l'échelle nationale, les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones urbains étaient 2,2 fois plus susceptibles d'avoir un besoin impérieux de logement que les non-Autochtones; dans les régions urbaines du Manitoba et de la Saskatchewan, la prévalence était au moins 3,6 fois plus élevée chez les Autochtones que chez les

non-Autochtones. Le taux élevé de besoin impérieux de logement des enfants et des jeunes Autochtones urbains est dû en grande partie au faible revenu des ménages. Chez les enfants et les jeunes vivant dans les ménages se trouvant dans cette situation, 84 % connaissaient des problèmes liés aux coûts, 29 % des problèmes concernant le caractère adéquat du logement (surpeuplement) et 23 % des problèmes de qualité (conditions), tandis que 36 % présentaient des problèmes multiples.

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Le besoin en logement et la mobilité résidentielle chez les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones en milieu urbain

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De nombreuses études ont examiné les tendances de la mobilité des Autochtones au Canada. Cependant, la majorité porte sur une seule dimension de la mobilité : la migration ou les déplacements entre les collectivités. La mobilité résidentielle ou le déménagement au sein de la même collectivité représente une autre dimension de la mobilité qui n'a pas fait l'objet d'études approfondies dans le contexte de la population autochtone canadienne. Cette dimension de la mobilité est importante, puisque ce processus permet aux ménages de s'ajuster afin de répondre à l'évolution de leurs besoins et ressources. Au cours des vingt dernières années, de nombreuses études ont porté sur les problèmes de logement que connaissent les populations autochtones urbaines (Clatworthy et Stevens, 1987; Spector, 1996). Cependant, peu ont comparé les conditions de logement des personnes qui déménagent à celles qui ne déménagent pas, et jusqu'à quel point la mobilité résidentielle se traduit en conditions de logement acceptables. Le présent article présente les résultats d'une recherche plus vaste sur les conditions et les besoins en logement des Autochtones au Canada². Il porte sur les besoins en logement et les taux de mobilité résidentielle des enfants (0 à 14 ans) et des jeunes (15 à 29 ans) Autochtones vivant dans des réserves situées en région urbaine et examine également les résultats en matière de

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FIGURE 1
Pourcentage d'enfants et de jeunes Autochtones urbains ayant un besoin impérieux de logement, par statut d'occupation et par province/région, 2001



Compte tenu du nombre élevé d'Autochtones canadiens vivant en région urbaine, qui sont pauvres et ont moins de 25 ans, les gouvernements et les intervenants communautaires sont fortement incités à réagir afin de donner à ces jeunes la possibilité de prendre la place qui leur est due au sein de la société canadienne. La question qui se pose est : Sommes-nous prêts à faire ce qu'il faut?

Note

1 L'ANCA offre les programmes des CUPJA dans neuf régions à travers le pays. Des processus adaptés aux régions sont offerts à Vancouver; en Colombie-Britannique (à l'exception de Vancouver); dans le Nord (Yukon, Territoires du Nord-Ouest et Nunavut); en Alberta; en Saskatchewan; au Manitoba; en Ontario, au Québec; et dans l'Est (Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador, Nouveau-Brunswick et Île-du-Prince-Édouard).

Cependant, le programme est limité dans sa capacité d'aller au devant des jeunes Autochtones canadiens sur le plan des paramètres d'exécution (le financement annuel des projets ralentit le rythme), des régions desservies (les fonds sont alloués par région plutôt que par collectivité, ce qui signifie que de grandes villes comme Toronto, Montréal, Halifax et d'autres n'ont pas bénéficié d'initiatives ciblées) et de la portée démographique (les programmes des CUPJA sont limités aux jeunes de 12 ans et plus, laissant de côté le groupe des 7 à 12 ans). Si on ne s'en tenait pas à ces limites, plus de jeunes de différents groupes d'âge profiteraient de ces programmes dans plus d'endroits. D'après notre expérience auprès des jeunes Autochtones vivant en région urbaine, les CUPJA ont des répercussions durables quant aux services de qualité offerts aux jeunes Autochtones canadiens.

Conclusion

Selon notre point de vue en tant que prestataires de services destinés aux Autochtones urbains, l'initiative des CUPJA a été une grande réussite.

démographique. Les CUPJA sont les seuls à offrir un soutien en matière de programmes. Le gouvernement fédéral est responsable de plusieurs programmes axés sur la petite enfance : le Programme d'aide préscolaire aux Autochtones, le Programme canadien de nutrition prénatale et le Programme d'action communautaire pour les enfants offrent tous des services efficaces à grande échelle aux enfants Autochtones de zéro (prénatal) à six ans. Cependant, il n'existe pas de programmes pour les jeunes de sept à treize ans. À l'exception des programmes en matière de justice, d'alcool et de drogues, aucune autre option de programmes n'est offerte aux enfants de plus de six ans.

Lorsque les jeunes participent aux programmes, ils ne présentent pas de comportements négatifs.

pour nous aider à comprendre les nombreuses réalités auxquelles font face les jeunes Autochtones urbains. À Fort Smith, par exemple, les programmes des Territoires du Nord-Ouest sont élaborés en y intégrant la culture et les jeux traditionnels afin de capter l'intérêt des jeunes. De Vancouver à Halifax, les jeunes Autochtones urbains et les organismes

au service des jeunes sont à même de créer des programmes qui auront le maximum d'impact sur les jeunes de leur collectivité. Grâce à ce processus, l'ANCA a pu avoir un impact important partout au pays. Au cours des six premières années, plus de 325 000 participants ont profité de programmes dans le cadre de projets gérés par l'ANCA. Parmi toutes les catégories de projets admissibles à l'échelle nationale, 100 projets sont réalisés en moyenne chaque année. En 2006, plus de 69 000 jeunes ont profité des programmes des CUPJA dans le cadre du processus de l'ANCA, ce qui représente un nombre important d'Autochtones ayant accès à des programmes opportuns et pertinents. Fondamentalement, le succès du programme peut être attribué au fait que les programmes des CUPJA sont réalisés par les jeunes, pour les jeunes. D'après nos observations, l'approche adoptée par les CUPJA a donné plusieurs résultats positifs chez les jeunes Autochtones urbains. Lorsque les jeunes participent aux programmes, ils ne présentent pas de comportements négatifs. Les soirées au gymnase, les camps, les ateliers culturels

et les autres activités de ce type rem-placent les activités moins positives. Il y a aussi, dans une certaine mesure, des impacts à long terme. En effet, on croit que les jeunes qui ont régulièrement accès à des programmes axés sur la culture sont plus en mesure d'avoir du succès dans leurs études et sur le marché du travail.

Aux endroits où le financement est disponible, l'impact sur les jeunes Autochtones est considérable et évident. Le financement de l'Initiative des CUPJA a permis au Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre, à Thompson au Manitoba, de réaliser un programme de justice pour les jeunes qui a fait ses preuves. Il offre des activités de loisir, éducatives et culturelles ainsi que de l'orientation sur les services spécialisés offerts à l'extérieur du centre. Offert à tous les jeunes de Thompson, le programme attire en moyenne 25 à 30 jeunes par soir. Un orienteur aide les adolescents à prévoir leur future carrière, un travailleur de la rue cible les jeunes qui « profitent » du canapé des amis et un aîné donne de l'information sur la drogue et l'alcool. Le conseil des jeunes a son propre programme de collecte de fonds, ce qui donne aux jeunes la possibilité d'être partie prenante aux programmes et aux services offerts tout en les gardant hors de la rue, occupés par des activités culturelles. À Lillooet, en Colombie-Britannique, le Centre d'amitié a créé un programme pour répondre aux problèmes de cohésion sociale. Suite aux préoccupations exprimées par les résidents

de Lillooet à propos des « rassemblements » de jeunes Autochtones dans la rue principale, un projet a été élaboré afin de s'attaquer de front à ce problème. Fiable et adapté aux différences culturelles, le programme mis en œuvre garde les jeunes Autochtones hors de la rue en leur offrant des services novateurs. L'année dernière, ce programme a fourni des services à plus de 500 jeunes. Par la suite, d'autres organismes et paliers de gouvernement ont appuyé ce projet en augmentant le financement, en offrant des ateliers et en favorisant les partenariats. Aujourd'hui, la violence et le vandalisme sont en baisse et les réponses de la communauté sont plus coordonnées et efficaces. Ces deux projets font partie d'une certaine d'autres à l'échelle nationale visant à améliorer la qualité de vie des Autochtones urbains. Les CUPJA ont pour motivation d'aider à améliorer la qualité de vie. Par exemple, la plus grande réussite des CUPJA serait sans contredit de contribuer à ce que plus de jeunes obtiennent leur diplôme d'études secondaires. Ce diplôme donne des résultats positifs directs à long terme, tels que de meilleures perspectives d'emploi, des niveaux de revenu plus élevés, un meilleur statut d'occupation, moins de rapports avec le système juridique, une meilleure santé, etc. L'importance d'offrir un soutien de qualité aux mères seules est un autre exemple : dans ce cas, le programme aide la mère et l'enfant, les avantages sont donc multiples. C'est pourquoi il est surprenant qu'il n'y ait pas plus d'options de programmes destinés aux jeunes Autochtones urbains. On observe encore un manque de soutien en matière de programmes et de politiques axés sur cet important groupe

Renforcer les programmes pour les jeunes Autochtones en milieu urbain

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 Association nationale
 des centres d'amitié

Les jeunes Autochtones représentent un des grands défis des responsables de l'élaboration des politiques canadiennes en matière de démographie. Les statistiques peuvent être formulées de différentes façons. Cependant, les « trois 50 » sont probablement celles qui ont le plus d'impact. Selon le recensement de 2001, 50 % des Autochtones vivent en région urbaine, 50 % ont moins de 25 ans et 50 % ne terminent pas leurs études secondaires. Imaginez un instant tout ce que cela peut entraîner sur le plan de l'élaboration des politiques et des programmes. Les jeunes Autochtones doivent avoir accès à des programmes qui répondent aux problèmes sociaux dus à la pauvreté et à la faible instruction de la population. L'Initiative des centres urbains polyvalents pour les jeunes Autochtones (CUPJA) est un des rares programmes à l'échelle nationale à se pencher sur ces problèmes particuliers. Créée en 1998 dans le cadre de *Rassemblement nos forces*, en réponse du gouvernement fédéral à la Commission royale sur les peuples autochtones, l'Initiative des CUPJA vise à améliorer les perspectives culturelles, sociales, économiques et personnelles des jeunes Autochtones urbains dans le cadre de projets culturels axés sur la santé, les connaissances élémentaires et le développement individuel. Les CUPJA comptent quatre partenaires offrant des structures distinctes de prestation de programmes : l'Association nationale des centres d'amitié (ANCA)¹, qui fournit environ 10,5 M\$ en programmes partout au Canada; le Ralliement national des Métis et Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, qui administrent les programmes dans leurs collectivités respectives; et enfin, Patrimoine canadien, qui offre les programmes des CUPJA à Winnipeg,

Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Edmonton et Calgary. La valeur approximative des programmes offerts dans le cadre de cette initiative par l'entremise des partenaires est de 25 M\$ par année. Deux raisons font des CUPJA un modèle unique de prestation de programmes à l'intention des jeunes Autochtones. Premièrement, l'Initiative permet aux jeunes Autochtones de participer à tous les aspects des programmes; de l'évaluation des propositions aux activités locales, en passant par la gestion des programmes. Des comités, composés de jeunes Autochtones, dont au moins la moitié viennent des régions pour lesquelles des programmes sont envisagés, évaluent les projets présentés et choisissent ceux qui seront financés. Ces jeunes sont habilités à examiner et à évaluer les propositions de programmes. En fait, ils sont en mesure d'assurer que les programmes des CUPJA répondent à des besoins qu'ils ne connaissent que trop bien. De plus, les jeunes prennent part à la gestion de chaque projet financé par cette initiative. Une fois un projet approuvé, un conseil de jeunes en assure la supervision et un jeune doit faire partie des signataires autorisés. Deuxièmement, l'Initiative des CUPJA a pour objectif clé de s'adapter continuellement aux besoins des collectivités locales. Nous sommes en mesure d'assurer l'accessibilité à des programmes pertinents grâce aux objectifs généraux des programmes et en permettant aux collectivités de concevoir leurs propres initiatives en matière de programmes, souvent uniques. Partout au Canada, des organismes communautaires peuvent se regrouper et planifier des services et des initiatives nécessaires dans leurs collectivités. Cet aspect est essentiel

partie d'un accord de transfert des responsabilités en matière de santé sont plus susceptibles de déclarer ne « presque jamais » ressentir un équilibre physique. Réciproquement, les jeunes des collectivités faisant partie d'un tel accord sont plus susceptibles de déclarer ressentir « toujours » un équilibre spirituel (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005a : 221). En outre, un nombre plus élevé de jeunes de ces collectivités fréquentent l'école (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005a : 163).

Donner la possibilité de rêver

qui dispose de 65 M\$ sur cinq ans, a également été mise en œuvre. Nonobstant ces initiatives nationales, s'occuper des facteurs clés de la santé et du bien-être de ces jeunes demande une approche globale, durable et à long terme de l'autonomie gouvernementale et du développement communautaire permettant ainsi d'explorer leur plein potentiel pour le bien-être de l'ensemble des Premières nations et des Canadiens. Comme l'a indiqué l'APN en 2006, la réussite du développement communautaire nécessitera de s'attaquer au sous-financement chronique des collectivités au cours des dix dernières années, de reconnaître les gouvernements des Premières nations et d'établir des relations mutuellement acceptables et efficaces entre les Premières nations et les gouvernements fédéral, provinciaux et territoriaux (APN, 1996). Les politiques et les programmes actuels sont fragmentés, en général sous-financés et incapables de répondre aux nouveaux enjeux qui menacent la résilience et le leadership des jeunes, comme l'activité criminelle des gangs, l'accoutumance à la méthamphétamine et aux médicaments sur ordonnance, la perte des langues traditionnelles, etc.

Dans le domaine du leadership des jeunes, la Commission royale sur les peuples autochtones a recommandé la tenue d'une campagne nationale pour sensibiliser les jeunes aux perspectives de servir leurs Nations dans un contexte d'autonomie gouvernementale (Commission royale sur les peuples autochtones, 1996). La CRPA laisse entendre qu'une politique nationale axée sur les jeunes Autochtones devrait englober plusieurs domaines de programmes clés : l'éducation,

Notes

1. Conseil national des jeunes de l'APN. Cultural-Economic-Political-Social Youth Development Leadership Training, 2004, non publié.
2. L'ERS est une enquête menée par les Premières nations. Elle a été remplie par 4 983 jeunes de 12 à 17 ans, entre août 2002 et novembre 2003. L'échantillon de l'enquête de 2002-2003 a été conçu de manière à représenter la population des Premières nations vivant dans des collectivités des Premières nations dans toutes les provinces et territoires, à l'exception du Nunavut. En tout, 238 collectivités ont participé et 5,9 % de la population cible a répondu. Le taux d'échantillon-nage parmi les jeunes était de 10 %.

Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du PRP à <www.recherchepolitique.ca>

nombreuse et un risque plus élevé de pénurie de travailleurs. Outre le recrutement d'immigrants qualifiés, une autre solution à cette pénurie potentielle consiste à augmenter la participation des travailleurs parmi les groupes sous-représentés sur le marché du travail. Les jeunes des Premières nations constituent la seule ressource qui pourrait contribuer valablement à la prospérité future du Canada et à sa capacité concurrentielle à l'échelle mondiale.

La création de possibilités pour les Premières nations comporte la nécessité d'une stratégie globale, durable et à long terme afin d'influer sur leur résilience. Il a été établi que les facteurs suivants contribuent à accroître la résilience des jeunes et, par conséquent, les protègent contre les tendances suicidaires : un fort sentiment d'identité et d'estime de soi, des familles et des collectivités saines et solidaires, de fortes habiletés d'adaptation, la connaissance de la culture et de la langue, une croyance en sa capacité à résoudre les problèmes de la vie et une vision positive du futur. Les activités visant la résilience comprennent le développement et le partage d'outils de formation culturellement pertinents, des ressources qui favorisent la résilience, l'engagement des jeunes dans la planification de la prévention du suicide, et le soutien au développement de jeunes leaders autochtones (Kelly, 2007 : 70).

L'ERS 2002-2003 révèle la grande importance d'offrir aux jeunes des Premières nations le même niveau de vie de base que celui de la majorité des jeunes Canadiens afin d'améliorer leur rendement scolaire. Ils seraient ainsi moins susceptibles de présenter des comportements à risque comme

[l'idéation suicidaire et l'augmentation de la consommation d'alcool et de l'activité sexuelle. Ce niveau de base comporterait un régime alimentaire sain et équilibré, des programmes sportifs et culturels (y compris le tambour et la danse) et des conditions de logement sécuritaires. Voici un exemple tiré du rapport final de l'ERS :

[traduction] Il importe de créer des programmes d'éducation en santé sur les effets de l'augmentation de la consommation d'alcool (tabac) et de l'activité sexuelle sur le rendement scolaire et de les offrir à un jeune âge... L'encouragement du traitement actif des maladies et l'accès à celui-ci pourrait avoir des effets positifs sur le rendement scolaire (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005a : 165).

Outre des activités physiques sécuritaires, la sécurité alimentaire et l'accès à des services de santé nécessaires, les jeunes doivent également avoir accès au soutien des spécialistes et des pairs afin de pouvoir prendre des décisions éclairées concernant leur santé et leur bien-être :

[traduction] Lorsque les jeunes des Premières nations ont besoin d'aide pour affronter leurs problèmes, ils se tournent en général vers leurs parents, leurs tuteurs, leurs amis ou y font face seuls. La proportion de jeunes qui déclarent avoir des problèmes de santé mentale est plus élevée que ceux qui semblent consulter des services de santé mentale ou des guérisseurs traditionnels. Par conséquent, les prestataires de services

dans les collectivités n'ont pas la possibilité d'offrir de l'aide lorsqu'elle est requise (Readin *et al.*, 2007 : 23).

Selon l'analyse de données, il est recommandé, pour le soutien social des jeunes, que l'approche des programmes évolue vers une structure plus globale et plus en harmonie avec les traditions en remplissant les rôles de la famille élargie et de la collectivité. De plus, les collectivités devraient obtenir un appui pour l'élaboration de stratégies permettant aux jeunes d'avoir davantage accès aux services de santé mentale (Readin *et al.*, 2007 : 26).

Fondamentalement, toutefois, investir dans les jeunes signifie aussi investir dans les administrations publiques et les collectivités. De plus en plus de données établissent un lien entre une meilleure confiance en soi et la résilience des jeunes et les mesures des Premières nations en matière d'autonomie gouvernementale et de prise en charge des services par les collectivités. Dans les collectivités des Premières nations en Colombie-Britannique, Chandler et Lalonde ont établi une corrélation entre des taux plus bas de suicide chez les jeunes et un degré plus élevé de « continuité culturelle », c'est-à-dire dans les collectivités présentant au moins un des facteurs suivants : autonomie gouvernementale, revendications territoriales, prise en charge des systèmes d'éducation, de santé, de police et d'incendie, et accès à de l'équipement culturel (Voir leur article dans ce numéro).

L'ERS 2002-2003 renforce ce constat. Par exemple, elle montre que les jeunes des collectivités ne faisant pas

élèves chez les femmes, les jeunes plus âgés et les jeunes vivant dans des collectivités isolées. À 14 ans, le taux est presque trois fois plus élevé qu'à 12 ans. La majorité des jeunes commencent à fumer à l'âge de 12 ans. Ceux qui arrêtent le font en moyenne à 14 ans, d'abord dans l'intention d'avoir un mode de vie plus sain, ensuite par respect pour leurs proches. Près de 70 % des jeunes indiquent avoir essayé d'arrêter de fumer au cours de l'année. Bien que le taux de tabagisme parmi les jeunes des Premières nations soit plus élevé que parmi les autres jeunes Canadiens, ces derniers fument davantage, soit en moyenne 8,1 cigarettes par jour comparativement à 5,9 (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 203-205).

Environ 65 % des jeunes des Premières nations déclarent boire plus de cinq consommations en une occasion, au moins une fois par mois, tandis que 32,7 % ont consommé du cannabis. Les jeunes fumeurs sont plus susceptibles de consommer de l'alcool et du cannabis. Les données de l'ERS 2002-2003 renforcent les études antérieures qui soulignent l'importance de prévenir l'initiation précoce au tabagisme (13 ans et moins), non seulement en raison des dangers pour la santé mais aussi pour « produire des effets secondaires salutaires en bloquant la porte d'entrée aux drogues (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 205) ».

Les jeunes qui ne fument pas et ne consomment ni alcool ni autre drogue sont plus susceptibles d'affirmer, dans une certaine mesure, qu'ils sont heureux et fiers de ce qu'ils sont, qu'ils ont de nombreux points positifs et qu'ils n'ont jamais pensé au suicide (Comité sur la gouvernance

de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 204). De même, ils sont plus susceptibles d'être moins stressés, de se sentir aimés et de déclarer que quelqu'un est toujours disponible pour les amener chez le médecin (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 204).

La proportion de jeunes qui indiquent être actifs sexuellement est moins élevée chez les Premières nations que chez les autres Canadiens en général, quoique dans le groupe des 12 à 14 ans, les jeunes des Premières nations soient 8 à 9 % plus susceptibles d'être actifs sexuellement. La majorité de ces jeunes utilisent des condoms (81 %), alors que beaucoup moins déclarent prendre un contraceptif oral (19,2 %). Comparativement aux autres jeunes Canadiens, beaucoup plus de ces jeunes déclarent utiliser le condom. Environ 4,5 % des jeunes des Premières nations affirment avoir été enceintes ou avoir mis quelque un encointe (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 209).

L'éducation

On a découvert que le bien-être physique a un effet direct sur l'ins-truction scolaire chez les jeunes des Premières nations. Ceux qui ont indiqué avoir une santé satisfaisante ou fragile sont plus susceptibles de ne pas fréquenter ou de ne pas aimer l'école ou de connaître des problèmes d'apprentissage (Comité sur la gouver-nance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 160).

Les facteurs intervenant dans leur faible performance scolaire sont également liés à des proportions plus élevées de consommation d'alcool, d'usage du tabac et d'activité sexuelle. En outre, plus de la moitié (57,4 %) de ces jeunes vivent dans des ménages de

six personnes ou plus, essentiellement des familles. Ceux qui ont indiqué avoir redoublé sont plus susceptibles de vivre dans des logis surpeuplés. Manger sainement, faire du sport, de la musique et des activités traditionnelles comme le tambour et la danse, et augmenter la fréquence des activités physiques sont de bons critères pour améliorer le rendement et la fréquentation scolaires (Comité sur la gouver-nance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 167). Bien que les jeunes dont au moins un parent a fréquenté le pensionnat soient plus susceptibles de connaître des troubles d'apprentissage ou de redoubler, ce lien n'a pas été établi en ce qui a trait aux grands-parents, indice possible d'une diminution générationnelle des impacts de la fréquentation des pensionnats (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 167).

Reconnaître le potentiel

L'augmentation rapide de la population des Premières nations signifie que des milliers de leurs jeunes entreront sur le marché du travail au cours des vingt prochaines années. Plus de la moitié des citoyens des Premières nations vivant dans leurs collectivités ont moins de 25 ans (Ressources humaines et développement social Canada, 2005). Selon la Commission royale sur les peuples autochtones (CRPA) et le recensement de la population autochtone de 2001, plus de 300 000 emplois destinés aux jeunes Autochtones devront être créés avant 2016 pour répondre à l'augmentation de la population active autochtone et diminuer l'écart en matière d'emploi entre les peuples autochtones et les autres Canadiens.

Au Canada, la diminution de la population encore en âge de travailler se traduira par une main-d'œuvre moins

Selon l'ERS 2002-2003, un jeune sur huit avait consulté un guérisseur traditionnel au cours de l'année (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005a : 223). Cependant, une proportion beaucoup plus élevée, entre un sur trois et un sur quatre (selon le sexe), continue de participer activement à des activités traditionnelles comme la chasse, la pêche, le trapage et la cueillette de baies ou de nourriture. Environ 25 % des jeunes parlent leur langue traditionnelle et 82 % considèrent que c'est important (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 168). Toutefois, un peu plus de 25 % des jeunes mentionnent s'être sentis tristes ou déprimés pendant deux semaines de suite au cours d'une année. Un répondant sur cinq comptait un ami proche ou un membre de sa famille qui s'était suicidé au cours de l'année, ce qui augmente considérablement la probabilité que ces jeunes aient eux-mêmes vécu une situation difficile (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 187). De plus, ils sont deux fois plus susceptibles d'éprouver une idéation suicidaire que ceux qui n'ont pas été marqués par le suicide (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 187). Jusqu'à l'âge de 12 ans, 10 % des jeunes ont pensé au suicide au moins une fois (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005a : 221). Chez les jeunes dont au moins un parent a fréquenté un pensionnat, 26,3 % ont pensé au suicide, comparativement à seulement 18 % chez ceux dont les parents n'étaient pas allés dans un

pensionnat (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005a : 217). L'écart entre les sexes est également important. Les garçons sont plus susceptibles de toujours se sentir en équilibre physique et mental (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005a : 222). De plus, amples analyses permettraient de déterminer les causes fondamentales de cet écart entre les sexes.

La santé physique

Comme il a été mentionné, la majorité des jeunes des Premières nations considèrent être en bonne ou excellente santé mais les facteurs de risque importants auxquels ils sont exposés risquent à long terme d'avoir un impact sur leur santé physique. Plus de 42 % de ces jeunes ont un surplus de poids ou sont obèses et seulement 45 % sont considérés suffisamment actifs, c'est-à-dire qu'ils pratiquent des activités d'intensité modérée à forte pendant 30 minutes presque tous les jours (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b). Chez tous les jeunes, la marche est l'activité physique la plus répandue. Environ la moitié déclarent regarder la télévision au moins trois heures par jour et un jeune sur cinq consacre le même temps aux jeux vidéo ou à l'ordinateur (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b). Dans l'ensemble, 33,5 % ont un régime alimentaire sain et équilibré (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières

nations *et al.*, 2005b : 169). En résumé, on a établi une corrélation positive entre les jeunes qui sont suffisamment actifs, ont un régime alimentaire sain et équilibré, mangent des baies ou de la végétation sauvage et des mets traditionnels, ceux qui n'ont pas de pensées suicidaires et ceux qui n'ont jamais fumé (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 169, 171-172). Les allergies, l'asthme et les infections de l'oreille sont les maladies chroniques les plus courantes chez les jeunes, comme chez les enfants des Premières nations (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 184). Près de deux fois le taux des jeunes Canadiens et des Premières nations réunis, vivant à l'extérieur de leur collectivité. Les données de l'ERS 2002-2003 laissent entendre que les jeunes des Premières nations qui souffrent de maladies pouvant avoir un impact grave sur leur santé à long terme et leur rendement scolaire ont de la difficulté à se faire traiter. Par exemple, bien qu'environ deux jeunes sur trois souffrent d'asthme, seulement 16,5 % de ceux qui souffrent de bronchite chronique et 12,6 % de ceux à qui on a diagnostiqué un trouble d'apprentissage se font traiter pour ces maladies (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005b : 184). Les comportements liés à la santé L'usage du tabac non traditionnel est courant chez 37,8 % des jeunes des Premières nations, les taux étant plus

La santé des jeunes des Premières nations les défis et le potentiel

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Les auteurs souhaitent remercier le Conseil des jeunes de l'Assemblée des Premières Nations (APN) et le Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations, qui ont fourni l'orientation et les connaissances nécessaires à la rédaction du présent article.

Le Conseil des jeunes de l'APN a énoncé une vision des générations futures des Premières nations : Nos citoyens vivront en bonne santé et en respectant leur vie individuelle, familiale, communautaire et leur nation. Nos générations futures seront élevées dans le seul culte de la vérité, vivront pleinement leur rôle traditionnel en s'appuyant sur leur histoire familiale, et comprendront comment celle-ci les a façonnées. Nos citoyens auront confiance en eux et dans la famille, la communauté, les autres nations, la terre et les ressources¹.

Par cette vision, le Conseil des jeunes cherche à motiver les jeunes des Premières nations à prendre leur vie en main et à s'assurer un meilleur niveau de vie, qui ne soit pas diminué par les effets déjà anciens de la colonisation ou de l'héritage intergénérationnel des pensionnats indiens.

Pour concrétiser cette vision, plusieurs défis devront être surmontés au moyen d'interventions nationales et régionales en matière de politiques et de programmes. Afin d'éclairer l'élaboration et le suivi de ces interventions, le présent article examine les données récentes de l'Enquête régionale longitudinale sur la santé des Premières nations (ERS) 2002-2003 sur les jeunes des Premières nations vivant dans leurs collectivités². Pilotée par les Premières nations, l'ERS montre le soutien proactif des chefs

Reconnaître les défis

Vivre en équilibre

Selon l'ERS 2002-2003, la majorité des jeunes des Premières nations déclarent ressentir un équilibre sur les plans physique, émotionnel, mental et spirituel, toujours ou la plupart du temps (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005a : 160). En général, la population est en santé, ce qui va au-delà de l'absence de maladie. Par exemple, une étude récente menée auprès de 25 jeunes Autochtones de la Colombie-Britannique révèle qu'« exprimer une émotion/la purification » constitue une des meilleures stratégies pour aider les jeunes suicidaires (Kelly, 2007 : 9). Les pratiques traditionnelles de guérison ont pour fonction d'améliorer tous les aspects de la vie d'une personne incluant les aspects physiques, affectifs, psychologiques et spirituels. Les individus doivent s'interroger et essayer de reconnaître et d'examiner les causes profondes de leurs problèmes. Il s'agit d'un véritable processus spirituel qui mène à l'« équilibre » ou à la « plénitude », un processus par lequel le retour aux croyances et aux pratiques spirituelles traditionnelles devient partie intégrante de la guérison (Comité sur la gouvernance de l'information des Premières nations *et al.*, 2005a : 116).

des Premières nations à des initiatives communautaires offrant aux jeunes de meilleures perspectives sur les plans de la santé, de l'éducation, des enseignements traditionnels et de l'emploi.

programme non évalué de langue Stó:lō, peuvent également aider les jeunes à adopter très tôt des identités plus positives et à acquérir des facultés langagières en générales.

En ce qui concerne les stratégies scolaires, les politiques éducatives provinciales et d'arrondissement scolaires doivent être définies en coordination avec les dirigeants des Premières nations. En Colombie-Britannique, par exemple, les jeunes issus de la nation Stó:lō fréquentent des écoles réparties dans divers districts scolaires et ont accès à des programmes propres à leur nation. Au sein de l'arrondissement scolaire de Chilliwack, les représentants de la nation Stó:lō participent à certains aspects du programme scolaire afin de favoriser les résultats et la rétention scolaires. Ce groupe ethnique offre également un programme destiné aux décrocheurs désirant finir leurs études de base à l'âge adulte. Plusieurs de ces programmes sont en cours d'évaluation à la demande de la nation Stó:lō, du district scolaire de Chilliwack et du ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien. En outre, la Colombie-Britannique a récemment créé une commission scolaire des Premières nations qui axera ses efforts sur bon nombre des préoccupations politiques énoncées ci dessus.

De même, le maire de la ville de New York, Michael Bloomberg a récemment lancé un programme de transfert pécuniaire conditionnel (conditional cash transfers) financé par des fonds privés pour inciter les parents d'enfants « à risque » à entreprendre des tâches de routine telles que l'aide aux devoirs, les visites chez le médecin et les rencontres parents professeurs.

Ainsi que de nombreux programmes innovateurs sont centrés sur les enfants et les adolescents, les programmes axés sur le marché du travail sont importants aussi pour améliorer les possibilités d'emploi des jeunes de 16 à 18 ans. Le programme étatsunien Job Corps, de même que le Community Development Project en Australie, projet qui visait tout particulièrement à enrayer les taux de chômage élevés et chroniques parmi la population autochtone, ont eu tous les deux des repercussions positives sur la diminution des arrestations (Weatherburn *et al.*, 2006).

En milieu carcéral, les programmes éducatifs sont parmi les plus populaires chez les jeunes. Selon un rapport récent établi en 2007 par la McCrery Centre Society, les jeunes incarcérés dans les centres de détention de la Colombie-Britannique considéraient que les programmes éducatifs leur procuraient un contexte d'apprentissage favorable et ils souhaitaient voir le développement de programmes connexes. De même qu'avec d'autres programmes en milieu carcéral, le peu de temps que les détenus passent généralement en prison demande une certaine coordination avec les programmes offerts dans les communautés.

Deux autres considérations importantes se font jour. Tout d'abord, les classes surchargées dans les communautés et des contextes scolaires plus concurrentiels ne facilitent pas l'expérience d'apprentissage des jeunes exposés à des risques multiples.

Conclusion

à des risques.

Ensuite, les écoles parallèles peuvent stigmatiser les jeunes car ce système les isole des écoles conventionnelles et donne lieu à des perceptions ou catégorisations des élèves comme étant source de problèmes ou exposés à des risques.

Il serait hors de la portée de ce court article de discuter de toute la gamme des facteurs de risques associés à la présence disproportionnée des jeunes Autochtones en milieu carcéral. L'un des risques les plus graves est lié à la grossesse et aux dommages causés au fœtus en raison d'un stress excessif, de la malnutrition, du tabagisme, des drogues et de l'alcool. Nous avons évoqué par ailleurs (Corrado *et al.*, 2002) la nécessité d'instituer des col-lectes systématiques de renseignements sur les familles et enfants exposés à des risques complet de ces de réduire le spectre complet de ces risques le plus tôt possible. En outre, il est important pour les chercheurs en politiques d'examiner les systèmes les plus intégrés et qui promettent le mieux de répondre aux besoins de ces familles et de ces jeunes. De tels modèles existent au Québec, en Suède, en France et au Royaume Uni (voir par exemple Trepazier, 2004). Autrement dit, il n'existe pas de solutions politiques simples permettant de réduire le nombre disproportionné de jeunes Autochtones en prison. Par contre, des recherches convaincantes indiquent qu'il est nécessaire d'adopter des politiques englobant des services et programmes précoces, complets et intégrés à l'intention des jeunes Autochtones et de leurs familles lorsqu'ils sont exposés à des risques élevés ou multiples afin de réduire le nombre disproportionné de jeunes Autochtones en milieu carcéral.

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Pour consulter l'ensemble des références,

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évoqué par ailleurs (Corrado *et al.*,

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Il serait hors de la portée de ce court

Comme il fallait s'y attendre, le profil scolaire des jeunes incarcérés faisant l'objet de notre recherche la plus récente confirme que les problèmes y a suffisamment de jeunes Autochtones dans les grands centres urbains pour justifier le coût de programmes de traitement, la diminution considérable des ces jeunes en milieu carcéral s'est soldée par un amoindrissement des ressources en faveur des zones non urbaines, étant donnée la suppression des infrastructures et des financements. Par exemple, trois centres de détention établis en région (Boulder Bay, Centre Creek et Lakeview) ont fermé leurs portes et, en outre, les zones non urbaines bénéficient d'un nombre bien plus faible de programmes financièrement viables. Par contre, plusieurs ressources et programmes offerts dans les zones densément peuplées de Vancouver et du Lower Mainland en Colombie-Britannique font l'objet de listes d'attentes.

Stratégies d'intervention en milieu scolaire

Outre les politiques de prévention

de l'abus de drogues, il existe un besoin croissant de mettre l'accent sur des programmes éducatifs, notamment ceux conçus pour améliorer les résultats et la rétention scolaires. De nombreuses publications empiriques indiquent que l'appartenance précoce d'autres facteurs de risque aboutissant à une confrontation au système de justice pour les jeunes (Loeber et Farrington, 2001). Bien qu'il y ait un débat continu sur le lien de cause à effet entre l'échec, les mauvais résultats scolaires et le risque de confrontation à la justice pénale et à l'incarcération, il y a un consensus global sur le fait que des expériences scolaires positives constituent un facteur de protection et un facteur indirect très important (Maguin et Loeber, 1996).

Le volet scolaire peut faire intervenir des enseignants tuteurs et comporter des classes ciblées sur les troubles de l'apprentissage, les troubles d'hyperactivité avec déficit de l'attention et les victimes des séquelles de l'alcoolisation foetale. Des programmes de langues autochtones, tels que le

participation à un programme complet de réhabilitation débutant en prison et se poursuivant durant un certain temps après la libération est sous ordonnance de probation dans sa communauté. L'un des avantages particuliers de cette solution tient à l'utilisation de services intégrés conçus sur mesure et étendus sur une période appréciable – il faut du temps pour que ce genre de services produise des retombées positives. Trop souvent, les jeunes incarcérés n'ont pas accès à traitements efficaces ni à des programmes de réhabilitation car leur séjour en prison est généralement trop court pour que ces mesures engendrent des avancées positives. Toutefois, une généralisation du recours à des solutions de rechange telles qu'une PSPR impliquerait des modifications législatives du nombre des peines rendant un jeune délinquant admissible à cette solution ainsi qu'une augmentation des financements fédéraux en faveur de ce genre de programmes intensifs de réhabilitation.

Étant donné que les jeunes Autochtones, en vertu de la Loi sur le système de justice pénale pour les adolescents, sont assujettis au rapport Gladue (« R. c. Gladue », 1999) qui donne aux juges et aux agents de probation l'instruction de considérer les besoins spécifiques des jeunes Autochtones au moment de la condamnation, les politiques provinciales pourraient faire en sorte que les interventions de traitement, si elles sont appropriées, soient liées à toute peine privative de liberté accompagnée d'une ordonnance de probation. Cette mesure assurerait la continuité de tous les programmes de réhabilitation ou de traitement. Ces changements aideraient les agents de probation à relever un défi politique fondamental : obtenir les ressources et programmes nécessaires à l'application d'un plan de réhabilitation intégré de la prison à la communauté. Il peut s'agir de

En nous fondant sur notre recherche menée en Colombie-Britannique ainsi que sur les recherches conduites en Australie, nous croyons qu'il existe plusieurs perspectives politiques capables de jouer un rôle dans la diminution de la récidive et la prévention des premières peines criminelles touchant les jeunes Autochtones. Toutefois, pour ne pas dépasser la portée de ce bref article, nous n'allons pas étudier l'ensemble des implications politiques qui émergent des recherches publiées. Notre optique est limitée à deux principaux thèmes politiques : les stratégies de réduction de la consommation de drogues et les stratégies d'amélioration de la scolarité. Ces deux thèmes engendreront sans doute les effets les plus immédiats sur la diminution d'un vaste éventail de facteurs de risque.

Stratégies de diminution de l'usage de drogues

Le premier thème politique est axé sur les institutions scolaires et carcérales. Il implique d'offrir des programmes pour éduquer les jeunes sur les effets néfastes de : (1) l'usage précoce de drogues et d'alcool; (2) l'usage persistant de drogues et d'alcool, y compris celui des drogues douces; (3) l'usage de méthamphétamines; (4) l'usage occasionnel de drogues dures telles que la cocaïne et l'héroïne. Les recherches ont montré que les programmes d'éducation donnés à l'école peuvent diminuer l'usage de drogues tel que le tabagisme et l'usage de crystal meth (voir par exemple Kenninger et Hoffman, 1999; Ghosh-Dastidar, Longshore, Ellickson et McCaffrey, 2004). Dans la même veine, les conseillers scolaires, les conseillers autochtones, les jeunes mentors et les aînés peuvent faire la différence en offrant aux jeunes des conseils individualisés, du mentorat et un accès coordonné aux services connexes tels que les soins de santé, une nutrition adéquate, des programmes anti-intimidation

accompagnés du soutien aux victimes, l'aide aux problèmes familiaux de même que des mesures de soutien aux résultats et à la rétention scolaires. La plupart du temps, les programmes axés sur l'école sont largement pré-ventifs étant donné qu'ils sont susceptibles de diminuer une première confrontation à la justice pénale et que, avant tout, ils aident les jeunes à éviter une peine privative de liberté. Toutefois, ce genre d'initiatives est tout aussi important dans les institutions carcérales. Nos recherches antérieures (Corrado et Cohen, 2002; Cohen et Corrado, 2005) et nos recherches plus récentes (Corrado et Cohen, 2007), indiquent clairement que l'usage d'alcool et de drogues reste courant parmi les jeunes délinquants emprisonnés. Une étude portant sur 125 jeunes Autochtones a montré que plus de 90 p. 100 d'entre eux ont déclaré avoir commencé à prendre de la drogue et de l'alcool à un âge très précoce (vers 11 ans environ). En milieu carcéral, les services de diagnostic psychiatrique et psychologique sont importants aussi car il est fort probable que l'usage fréquent de drogues, surtout celui de drogues dures, est associé à des traumatismes infantiles impliquant souvent des antécédents familiaux de consommation de drogues, d'alcool, d'abus physiques et sexuels, de même que des maladies mentales et la criminalité (Corrado et Cohen, 2002; Cohen et Corrado, 2005).

Dans les cas où les facteurs de risque sont avérés, il est important d'offrir aux détenus des services de traitement intensif autant durant leur période d'incarcération que par la suite, une fois que la personne a réintégré la communauté. Concernant la deuxième phase, afin de maintenir les changements positifs accomplis en prison, il faut assurer la disponibilité de logements sains aux Autochtones dans les grands centres urbains tels que Vancouver. Cette orientation est

appuyée par des publications traitant de rechutes dans l'alcool et les drogues et qui concluent qu'en l'absence de ressources communautaires, de « loge-ments sains » et de mentors, la plupart des jeunes Autochtones qui ont abusé des drogues et de l'alcool feront une rechute à leur retour dans leur « vie de rue » ou parmi leurs comparses (Santé Canada, s.d.; Linklater, 1991). La pertinence des services antidrogue en milieu scolaire et carcéral est également appuyée par Weatherburn, Snowball et Hunter (2006) qui concluent que ces services sont nécessaires pour diminuer la surreprésentation des Autochtones dans le milieu de la justice pénale. Selon Weatherburn *et al.*, (2006), les conséquences de la consommation de drogues sont plus marquées que celles des autres facteurs de risque, sauf dans le cas de la distinction homme femme. De plus, en ce qui concerne l'emprisonnement, l'abus de drogues avait la conséquence la plus marquée parmi les 16 facteurs de risque définis dans les publications de recherche et touchant les jeunes et les adultes confrontés à la justice pénale ou à l'incarcération en général ainsi que la population autochtone en particulier. Weatherburn *et al.*, (2006) suggèrent de considérer des programmes de traitement coercitifs prenant par exemple la forme de tribunaux de traitement de la toxicomanie, étant donné que leurs recherches antérieures montrent clairement que ces mesures diminuent le nombre de récidives.

Concernant la *LS/PA*, la peine de placement et de surveillance dans le cadre d'un programme intensif de réadaptation (PPSPR) constitue l'une des mesures qui pourrait être utilisée à plus grande échelle. Normalement réservé aux délits les plus graves, ce mécanisme donne aux jeunes condamnés à la prison la possibilité d'éviter des peines réservées aux adultes en échange d'une

La sur-représentation des jeunes Autochtones en milieu carcéral

Les défis en matière de politiques

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Collège universitaire de la

vallée du Fraser

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Même si certaines études montrent que le nombre de jeunes Autochtones incarcérés a diminué au Canada depuis l'introduction de la Loi sur le système de justice pénale pour les adolescents (LSJPA) en 2003, le nombre disproportionné de jeunes Autochtones incarcérés reste une préoccupation politique importante (Latimer et Foss, 2004; Calverly, 2007). Par exemple, selon les données du recensement de 2001, les Autochtones représentaient environ 5 p. 100 de la population des adolescents Canadiens, mais constituaient 33 p. 100 des adolescents incarcérés (Latimer et Foss, 2004). Par conséquent, le défi pour les décideurs reste de diminuer la disparité grandissante entre la proportion d'Autochtones et de non Autochtones sous garde. Il existe des choix politiques susceptibles de répondre à cet enjeu. À partir d'un examen des ouvrages existants et d'une recherche récente menée en Colombie-Britannique par certains des auteurs, cet article présente certains de ces choix et repère les facteurs de risque connexes qui accroissent l'éventualité de l'incarcération d'Autochtones et de non Autochtones.

La recherche se poursuit pour cerner les raisons de la disparité de la population carcérale autant pour les Autochtones adultes qu'adolescents. On note toutefois, dans les publications actuelles, un consensus grandissant sur les principaux facteurs de risque liés à l'incarcération des jeunes. En bref, les trois principales causes distales de cette disparité sont les suivantes : choc culturel, facteurs socioéconomiques, et colonialisme (Rudin, s.d.).

Tout d'abord, la théorie du choc culturel pose comme principe que le concept occidental de la justice est diamétralement opposé à celui des peuples autochtones. Par conséquent, les peuples autochtones se sentent

historiquement maltraités par le système judiciaire occidental qui leur est imposé, surtout en ce qui concerne les sanctions et les peines privatives de liberté. La deuxième théorie est largement socioéconomique. Stenning et Roberts (2001) affirment par exemple que la pauvreté est la première cause de surreprésentation carcérale de l'importe quel groupe. La troisième théorie est axée sur les conséquences catastrophiques du colonialisme sur la culture et le mode de vie des peuples autochtones. Le point central de cette théorie consiste à suggérer que les politiques gouvernementales, clairement conçues pour détruire les valeurs et traditions autochtones par une assimilation forcée (p. ex. le système d'internat correspond au rejet de l'utilisation des langues et traditions autochtones), de même que les abus criminels systémiques pratiqués dans ces écoles et la transmission intergénérationnelle de syndromes de stress post-traumatiques contribuent à la disproportion actuelle du nombre de jeunes Autochtones incarcérés à ce jour (Sochting et al., 2007).

Au-delà de ces explications distales, il existe des facteurs de risque plus immédiats, qui sont largement d'origine personnelle et communautaire et qui offrent sans doute la promesse la plus immédiate de retombées politiques positives. La grande dépendance à l'alcool et aux drogues et les difficultés scolaires font partie de ces facteurs de risque. Selon Latimer et Foss, plus de la moitié (57 p. 100) des jeunes Autochtones incarcérés avaient des problèmes d'abus de drogues, alors qu'on soupçonne 25 p. 100 supplémentaires de ces jeunes d'avoir ce genre de problèmes. En outre, des recherches indiquent que les jeunes Autochtones incarcérés ont environ deux ans de retard dans leur scolarité par rapport à leur groupe d'âge et que la plupart d'entre eux (89 p. 100) avaient suivi l'école parallèle (Corrado et Cohen, 2007).

- 4 Thème repris à l'assemblée générale du CCI de 2006, « L'unité dans la diversité ».
- 5 Ces arguments, comme bien d'autres, pour la langue autochtone sont aussi avancés par l'Instance permanente sur les questions autochtones (2005).
- 6 Le délégué russe a annulé sa participation à la dernière minute, en raison de problèmes de visa. Un aîné et un traducteur russes étaient toutefois présents.
- 7 Notamment Alexina Kublu, membre inuite du Groupe de travail sur les langues et les cultures autochtones.
- 8 Les chercheurs en aménagement linguistique, comme Shohamy (2006), suggèrent que le réel pouvoir de diffuser la langue appartient aux locuteurs, surtout lorsqu'il y a consensus et action concertée de leur part, comme le préconisent les jeunes délégués du CCJI.
- 9 Même si les chercheurs reconnaissent de plus en plus que la vitalité d'une langue tient essentiellement à la somme des actions individuelles, la réglementation et les politiques sont souvent nécessaires pour créer des situations où les personnes peuvent pratiquer leur langue et agir pour la préserver (cf. Brenzinger, Heine et Sommer, 1991).
- 10 Le rapport sommaire peut être consulté en ligne au <<http://inuitcircumpolar.com/files/uploads/icc-files/CCJI-Language-Report-English.pdf>>.
- 11 Le rôle central que joue la langue pour les Inuits à l'échelle internationale et les Autochtones en général apparaît par exemple dans CCI, 2006a; Instance permanente sur les questions autochtones, 2005.
- Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du PRR à <www.recherchepolitique.gc.ca>

Notes

- 1 Anciennement la Conférence circumpolaire inuite; le nom a été modifié à l'assemblée générale de 2006 à Barrow, en Alaska.
- 2 Comme pour le CCI et le CCJI, « inuit » désigne dans cet article l'Inuit, le Yupik et l'Aléoute.
- 3 Ce colloque a été principalement financé par la Fondation Walter et Duncan Gordon, Nord canadien, et l'Association inuite Qikiqtani.

- (en particulier des aînés) et à faire pression sur les gouvernements et les organismes⁹. Ces engagements, résu-més dans le rapport issu du Colloque (Tulloch, 2005)¹⁰, laissent entrevoir un ensemble de recommandations stratégiques et de principes directeurs quant aux plans personnels, communautaires et internationaux sur la langue inuite, notamment :
- Reconnaître le droit fondamental des Inuits de connaître leur langue.
 - Soutenir l'établissement d'un bilinguisme équilibré.
 - Réformer le système d'éducation de façon à bien représenter les Inuits par :
 - des enseignants inuits formés et outillés;
 - la connaissance, les expériences et les valeurs inuites dans les programmes d'enseignement;
 - les ressources en langue inuite;
 - l'utilisation et l'enseignement de la langue inuite dans toutes les classes;
 - l'intégration des experts inuits (p. ex., les aînés) au processus d'apprentissage, les élèves profitant d'un apprentissage holistique dans la communauté.
 - Faciliter la collaboration entre les générations; entre les communautés, les régions et les pays, et au sein de ceux-ci; avec les membres de la communauté, les universitaires, les organismes et les gouvernements.
 - Obtenir le financement d'initiatives inuites afin de réaliser ce qui précède.

Futurs dirigeants

Miali-Elise Coley

Présidente sortante

Conseil circumpolaire

des jeunes Inuits

Shelley Tulloch

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Département d'anthropologie

Université Saint Mary's

Le Conseil circumpolaire des jeunes Inuits : pour l'avenir de la langue inuite

Les jeunes comptent pour plus de la moitié des 155 000 personnes représentées par le Conseil circumpolaire inuit (CCI). Leur nombre et leur vision témoignent de leur potentiel d'action collective. Le Conseil circumpolaire des jeunes Inuits (CJI) a été formé en 1994 afin de constituer un réseau de jeunes Inuits², d'établir des organismes nationaux et d'assurer la présence des jeunes au conseil exécutif du CCI. Tous les quatre ans, à l'Assemblée générale du CCI, les jeunes élisent un nouveau conseil formé de deux représentants du Groenland, du Canada, de l'Alaska et de la Russie (Tchoukotka), et d'un président provenant du pays d'accueil (en alternance). Le Conseil de 2002-2006, présidé par Miali-Elise Coley (Canada), se compose comme suit : Jonathan Epoo et Eric Nutarariag (Canada), Elizabeth Saaguliik Hensley et Lee Ryan (Alaska), Upaluk Poppel et Janus Kleist (Groenland), et Lubov Tajan (Tchoukotka). Les membres de l'équipe ont principalement travaillé par téléconférence et par courriel à la prévention du suicide, l'environnement, la culture et la langue.

En 2004, le CJI s'est lancé dans ce qui allait devenir le premier Colloque circumpolaire des jeunes sur la langue inuite³. Le CJI considérait la langue comme un thème auquel tous les jeunes Inuits pouvaient s'identifier et qu'ils pouvaient exploiter. Ce thème était l'expression de l'unité au-delà des frontières, du désir de célébrer un patrimoine commun tout en appartenant à accepter les différences⁴. La langue est aussi essentielle pour faire progresser les autres priorités : outil de

maintien de la culture, d'apprentissage de la sagesse des aînés et de formation du caractère, elle est le fondement de l'identité inuite⁵. Le CJI a établi un ensemble d'objectifs à atteindre dans ce colloque : insuffler la fierté de parler la langue inuite; encourager les jeunes à apprendre cette langue ou à l'employer plus souvent; et les amener à respecter les dialectes. De façon générale, le Colloque avait pour but de faire participer les jeunes à la prise de décision et de favoriser la conservation de la langue.

Le CJI a tenu ce premier colloque à Iqaluit, au Nunavut, du 15 au 19 août 2005. L'honorable Louis Tapardjuk, aîné inuit et ministre de la Culture, de la Langue, des Aînés et de la Jeunesse (gouvernement du Nunavut, Canada), a ainsi lancé le Colloque : « En regardant dans cette salle, je vois la génération dont nous dépendons tous pour assurer l'avenir de la langue inuite. » Ensemble, 20 jeunes Inuits aux profils variés – chasseurs, artistes, étudiants, dirigeants, enseignants – représentant l'Alaska, le Groenland et le Canada, ont partagé leurs expériences et se sont lancés le défi de faire de la langue inuite une façon « branchée » de parler. Les délégués ont présenté des exposés documentés, consulté les aînés, écouté les spécialistes des politiques et de l'aménagement linguistique⁷ et, surtout, ils ont pris part à un dialogue ciblé et animé. L'engagement et l'appel à l'action étaient au rendez-vous. Les jeunes se sont reconnus en tant qu'agents de préservation et de diffusion de la langue. À titre de locuteurs⁸ et de parents, ils se sont engagés à partager et à transmettre la langue inuite. En tant que futurs dirigeants, ils se sont engagés à diffuser l'information, à demander l'aide de la communauté

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- À plusieurs égards, l'anglais est devenu la langue d'utilisation courante.
- 6 Les jeunes Inuites citées ici sont toutes des femmes âgées de 20 à 25 ans, résidant à Iqaluit et dont l'entrevue a été réalisée entre 1999 et 2001. Leurs parents sont tous Inuits et l'inuktitut était leur langue maternelle. Bien que les propos de seulement trois femmes soient rapportés, leurs opinions sont représentatives des points de vue exprimés dans un grand nombre d'entrevues, de questionnaires et à l'occasion d'expériences d'observation participante dans la région de Baffin. Des enjeux semblables ont été soulevés subseqüemment dans d'autres collectivités.
- 7 Reclaiming Our Sinews est un exemple d'initiative ayant permis d'améliorer l'ap- prentissage de la langue par l'entremise d'interactions entre des femmes de tous âges formant un cercle de couture (pour une description de cette initiative finan- cée par l'organisme canadien, voir le Nunavut Literacy Council, 2004). Le programme de jumelage maître-apprenti, élaboré par Leanne Hinton (Hinton et al., 2002), constitue un exemple des expériences de mentorat qui ont vu le jour un peu partout en Amérique du nord et qui ont permis de revitaliser la langue.
- 8 Différentes approches visant l'atteinte de cet objectif se retrouvent dans Berger (2006) et Martin (2000).
- 9 Des entrevues de suivi réalisées auprès d'ainés Inuits laissent croire qu'ils souf- frent eux aussi lorsque les jeunes ne peu- vent comprendre l'inuktitut. Ils vivent également cette rupture et ce sentiment d'être « débranchés » quand leurs petits- enfants et arrière-petits-enfants utilisent le langage de ce qui constituait, par le passé, la langue des oppresseurs. Ils souf- frent aussi du bris de communication entre les générations et veulent non seulement faire partie des efforts de revit- talisation de la langue et aider les jeunes à apprendre, à se souvenir et à utiliser la langue Inuite mais aussi à poursuivre leur interaction avec les jeunes et transmettre leur savoir.

- l'inuktitut comme langue seconde, jeunes locuteurs (par ex., Norris et Jantzen, 2004).
- 3 Comme en témoignent les propos recueillis dans le cadre de la CRPA (1996) et du Groupe de travail sur les langues et les cultures autochtones (2005), de

(D13) J'ai parlé l'inuktitut jusqu'au secondaire. C'est à ce moment que je me suis mise à parler l'anglais plus souvent que l'inuktitut. Par contre, au travail, je parle maintenant davantage la langue Inuite. C'est une bonne chose parce que je maîtrisais de moins en moins cette langue...

Toute ma famille est Inuite... Quand je veux parler à mon père, habituellement, c'est ma mère qui sert d'intermédiaire... Quand j'ai quelque chose à lui dire... je vais... essayer de m'exprimer en inuktitut, mais il ne comprendra pas et ma mère devra lui répéter... J'ai- merais aller vivre dans une petite communauté. Quand je reviendrai, j'aimerais parler la langue, vous comprenez? L'inuktitut doit être fort à nouveau. Parce que c'est ma langue... et ma culture. Et je ne veux pas la perdre... J'ai l'impression de l'avoir perdue si rapide- ment, vous savez? Sans même m'en rendre compte... Mais ça revient. Pas aussi rapide- ment que je l'aurais souhaité, mais je m'améliore parce que je la parle plus souvent, et régulièrement... Lorsque je prête assistance à des clients plus âgés [au magasin], ils me posent des questions en inuktitut... et je n'arrive pas à comprendre. Mais j'ai envie de les rencontrer plus souvent... D'être entourée de gens qui parlent l'inuktitut. Et de pouvoir leur répondre dans la même langue plutôt que de m'adresser à eux en anglais. C'est ce qu'on fait depuis un certain temps mon ami et moi... Je parle l'inuktitut aussi long- temps que je peux. Et ça m'aide... Tout ce que je veux, c'est parler la langue... Je connais quelqu'un qui parlait bien l'inuktitut, mais il a déménagé dans le Sud... il a perdu puis réappris la langue et il est maintenant meilleur que jamais. Si seulement cela pouvait m'arriver.

Notes

devenir un moteur de développement communautaire dans plusieurs autres domaines.

- 1 Un transfert linguistique se produit lors- qu'une communauté de locuteurs par- lant majoritairement une langue donnée (langue A) opte majoritairement pour une autre langue (langue B). Ce transfert comporte généralement une période de bilinguisme, où les deux langues sont utilisées, pour se terminer par une connaissance et une utilisation moindres de la langue A dans la collectivité (cf. Fishman, 2001). Ce transfert s'étend sur plusieurs générations. Cependant, les jeunes cités dans cet article sont témoins de ce transfert qui se déroule sous leurs yeux (Tulloch, 2004).
- 2 Dans certains endroits, en raison des efforts de revitalisation, une nouvelle génération de jeunes Inuits apprend

2. Rétablir les interactions. Rendre possible et soutenir financière-ment des programmes qui mettent l'accent sur les interactions (notamment les interactions intergénérationnelles) et sur l'intégration à la collectivité par l'entremise, par exemple, de mentorat ou par l'établissement de cercles d'apprentissage⁷.
 3. Les actions doivent aussi soutenir l'apprentissage et l'utilisation continus de la langue et prévenir sa détérioration en favorisant l'intégration de la langue, des valeurs et des réalités inuites dans les écoles du Nord⁸.
- ## Conclusion
- Pour un grand nombre de jeunes Inuits, la langue de leurs ancêtres est une source de plaisir, permet de tisser des liens et favorise le sentiment d'appartenance. Pour d'autres, en revanche, l'incapacité d'adhérer aux normes de la communauté et de communiquer aisément avec leurs parents ou les aînés de la collectivité engendre un sentiment d'aliénation... En aidant les jeunes à parfaire leurs compétences en inuktitut, on leur permet d'inter-agir plus librement au sein de leur collectivité. La première femme avec qui j'ai discuté à Iqaluit exprimait cette idée à l'aide de termes comme « partie prenante », « acceptation sociale », « sentiment de fierté » et « retour au sein du tissu social de la collectivité »⁹. Comme le démontrent les expériences de vie des jeunes Inuits reliées dans cet article, la portée des activités de planification et des politiques linguistiques dépasse largement les seuls enjeux de langue. Les initiatives visant à revitaliser la langue inuite et les besoins dont elles découlent sont intimement liés au mieux-être des collectivités. Si le transfert linguistique des langues autochtones au profit de l'anglais (ou du français) traduit des changements sociaux plus profonds (incluant l'imposition venant de

par l'anglais. Pas plus que ne constituent un luxe la possibilité de communiquer avec ses parents ou ses grands-parents, de connaître ses origines, ou de choisir son éducation en fonction de ses propres valeurs (c.-à-d. la connaissance des pratiques et perspectives traditionnelles). Une planification en matière de langue fondée sur les besoins, les capacités et les aspirations de ceux qui la parlent permet la mise en œuvre d'initiatives de développement de l'inuktitut chez les jeunes Inuits. Nous suggérons trois principes directeurs pour arrimer ces initiatives aux points de vue exprimés dans cet article :

1. Reconnaître la valeur de cette langue ainsi que la lutte pour sa préservation. Reconnaître le rôle des particuliers et des institutions dans sa sauvegarde, ou sa perte.

La responsabilité

Si les jeunes acceptent la responsabilité de maintenir leur niveau de langue ou de la réapprendre, ils ont besoin du soutien de leur famille, de leur communauté, de différents organismes et du gouvernement. Les responsables de l'élaboration des politiques doivent interpréter avec prudence les raisons évoquées par les jeunes pour justifier l'importance de la langue inuite. On ne doit pas en conclure que les langues autochtones sont un luxe dans un monde dominé

transmet ce savoir à ses enfants. Elle n'est pas la seule : d'autres suivent également ce chemin. La source de leur motivation à réapprendre la langue est de nature communicationnelle : ils veulent pouvoir comprendre ceux qui s'expriment en inuktitut et pouvoir s'exprimer eux-mêmes dans cette langue au besoin. Ce réapprentissage est fondé sur les interactions : les apprentis côtoient des gens qui parlent la langue, ils passent du temps dans des communautés où l'inuktitut occupe encore une place importante et profitent des occasions de parler cette langue. Les propos de la dernière jeune Inuite cités à la page suivante (D13) démontrent les défis du bilinguisme, les motivations à trouver un équilibre entre deux langues ainsi que l'espoir que les choses changent.

(D13) Je ne me souviens plus très bien de ce que m'a dit mon professeur, mais on m'a dit de ne plus parler cette langue. Je l'ai dit à ma mère qui s'est sentie blessée, alors elle a cessé de le faire. Mon père aussi a cessé de me parler en inuktitut. Alors, je n'ai plus parlé depuis... Je crois que ça a changé ma relation avec mon père et ma mère et pas seulement la façon dont on interagissait comme personnes mais plus profondément comme Inuits. Ils ne me décrivent pas en inuktitut leur expérience de la vie sur le territoire et ne partagent pas leur vécu quotidien parce que leur langue première n'est pas l'anglais, c'est l'inuktitut... Je ne peux plus communiquer aussi facilement avec d'autres Inuits, comme avec les parents de mes amis. Lorsque je vais chez les amis de mon père, je ne peux plus discuter avec leurs épouses et apprendre la couture ou d'autres choses importantes en lien avec la façon dont elles ont été élevées. Quand je vais au magasin et que je vois une dame âgée qui semble vouloir m'adresser la parole, je souris simplement et je continue mon chemin, car je sais que je ne pourrai pas la comprendre.

Le rétablissement

La femme dont les propos sont rapportés ci-bas a entamé un réapprentissage de la langue de ses parents. Elle bien mener sa vie. abstrait : c'est un outil essentiel pour est beaucoup plus qu'un symbole communauté. En somme, l'inuktitut parents et de jouer un rôle dans leur une relation de proximité avec leurs ils trouvent plus difficile d'entretenir les propos sont rapportés ci-bas (D3), De plus, à l'image de la femme dont

les Inuits, comme d'autres groupes autochtones, ont été forcés d'adopter la langue et la culture dominantes. Des familles et des communautés ont éclaté lorsque les enfants, revenant de séjours dans des pensionnats, ne voulaient ou ne pouvaient plus parler la langue de leurs parents (cf. CRPA, 1996; Groupe de travail sur les langues et les cultures autochtones, 2005)³. Le souvenir d'une assimilation forcée et de règles d'ascendance imposées par des non-Inuits continue de hanter

autochtones par leur valeur intrinsèque. En effet, si les langues sont le symbole d'une identité et d'une culture distinctes, elles permettent également la transmission de valeurs traditionnelles. Bien que ces motivations soient répandues parmi les jeunes, il ne faut pas en conclure que l'importance des langues est *unique*. Comme le démontrent les entrevues auprès des jeunes Inuits, leurs préoccupations face à la disparition de leur langue ou leur joie à l'idée d'une langue inuite forte sont

(D4) J'ai grandi chez mes grands-parents. Mes grands-parents sont nés et ont grandi dans le Nord. Ils ont vécu sur la terre et c'est la langue qu'ils connaissent... À la maison, en famille, c'est l'inuktitut. La communication ne serait pas pareille [si je tentais de parler anglais]. Je peux imaginer mes grands-parents, l'air perplexe et même dégoûté, d'une certaine manière. Pour eux, c'est une question de respect. Certaines personnes ne font pas d'exceptions... Dans ma jeunesse, on m'a appris l'inuktitut parce que cette langue fait partie de nos vies, c'est grâce à elle que nous communiquons, que nous comprenons, puis que l'anglais ici est une langue seconde. Nos façons de communiquer et de nous comprendre sont particulières, mais je suis fière de pouvoir dire que je suis Inuk et je suis fière d'être Inuk quand je parle l'inuktitut. Fière aussi de pouvoir accéder aux connaissances de nos aînés, aux traditions... Je suis une joueuse de tambour expérimentée. Pour beaucoup de gens, le chant et le tambour sont au cœur des traditions et de notre façon d'entrer en relation les uns avec les autres. Mais pour moi, l'inuktitut signifie également autre chose... Il permet de se rapprocher des aînés, de leur poser des questions, de simplement s'asseoir et discuter avec eux. Maîtriser les deux langues offre plus de possibilités. Vous pouvez recueillir davantage d'information auprès d'un plus grand nombre de personnes que si vous connaissez seulement l'anglais. Il ne faut exclure personne.

les parents d'âge moyen et les grands-parents⁴. Certains ont privilégié l'anglais à la maison en croyant, à tort, que de transmettre l'inuktitut à leurs enfants pourrait leur nuire. Si une majorité de parents désire maintenant transmettre l'inuktitut à leurs enfants avant ou en même temps qu'ils apprennent l'anglais, la langue dominante continue de s'imposer insidieusement⁵. La réalité est encore loin de l'objectif d'un bilinguisme stable.

La volonté

On justifie habituellement le besoin et la volonté de préserver les langues

ancées dans la pratique, dans ce qu'ils peuvent *réaliser* grâce à l'inuktitut. Si celle-ci constitue un instrument d'expression de soi privilégié, elle facilite aussi l'attachement, la coopération et le développement des familles et des communautés. L'affaiblissement des compétences linguistiques est associé à des ruptures dans le réseau social. À l'inverse, le développement de ces mêmes compétences accroît les occasions de participation à la vie communautaire. Les récits de trois jeunes Inuits sur l'impact de leur niveau de compétences linguistiques (fortes, faibles ou en progression) en tant qu'individu et membre

Le sentiment d'exclusion

de la communauté témoignent de leur pragmatisme⁶.
L'intégration
Bien que beaucoup de jeunes Inuits maîtrisent l'inuktitut, cette jeune femme (D4) démontre une confiance en ses capacités linguistiques et culturelles peu commune. Comme chez ceux qui présentent un niveau de compétences semblable, ces capacités se développent en fonction du temps passé avec des membres plus âgés de la famille et du temps consacré à d'autres formes traditionnelles d'ex-pression. La capacité d'interagir dans la langue inuite permet aux jeunes de témoigner du respect, de se conformer aux normes de la communauté et d'afficher leur fierté d'appartenir à une communauté inuite. Choisir l'inuktitut ou l'anglais, selon les circonstances, facilite la communication : l'inuktitut constitue la « façon dont les Inuits se comprennent les uns les autres ». C'est la langue parlée par les aînés, une « langue qui n'exclut personne ». Cette façon de concevoir l'inuktitut comme outil de participation à la vie communautaire est très présente dans les entrevues avec les jeunes Inuits.

Parfois, l'importance de l'inuktitut dans la vie courante s'illustre de manière douloureuse. Ceux qui ne peuvent parler ni comprendre la langue ressentent une grande tristesse de ne pouvoir communiquer. Ils vivent une forme d'exclusion, contrairement à la joie et au sentiment de faire partie de la communauté vécus par ceux qui parlent la langue (voir plus haut). Sans la maîtrise de l'inuktitut, les jeunes Inuits trouvent plus difficile d'apprendre des aînés, d'acquiescer des savoir-faire traditionnels, de discuter des pratiques ancestrales ou simplement de mieux comprendre les perspectives inuites.

Ugausirtinnik Annirusunnig En quête de notre propre langue

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En 1999, j'entreprends un voyage à Iqaluit, au Nunavut, dans le but d'évaluer si les conditions en place permettent de soutenir la promotion de la langue inuite, ce qui est un des objectifs du gouvernement de ce territoire (cf. Commission d'établissement du Nunavut, 1996; Nunavut, 1999). Dans le monde de la planification et des politiques linguistiques, on dit souvent que ce sont la volonté et les capacités des populations qui doivent orienter les efforts

d'observation participante auprès de communautés du territoire de Baffin (suivis d'entrevues dans d'autres régions auprès de répondants d'un groupe d'âge différent) corroborent les impressions de la responsabilité de l'élaboration des politiques. Si la plupart des jeunes Inuits connaissent la langue inuite et la parlent à l'occasion, cela demeure à leurs yeux insuffisant pour atteindre leurs propres objectifs ou combler soins en matière d'interactions sociales (cette idée est mise de

(A1) C'est de plus en plus évident : un grand nombre d'Inuits ne parlent pas l'inuktitut. Ils sont Inuits, mais ne parlent pas leur propre langue. Ce phénomène est récent... Chez les adultes, c'est difficile... communiquer est un problème. Il n'y a pas suffisamment de la famille ne dialoguent pas suffisamment avec les aînés ou les membres plus âgés de la famille élargie... Il n'y a pas d'interaction. C'est pareil au travail... s'ils ne parlent pas l'inuktitut, même s'ils le comprennent, ils perdent ce lien qui relie les individus à la structure sociale et à la culture... Ils se découragent et perdent leur sentiment d'appartenance... L'acceptation sociale... nous avons tous besoin de ce sentiment d'appartenance. Cela crée parfois des fictions ou plutôt du mécontentement. La promotion de la langue est une bonne chose, je crois... Pour qu'elle reste forte, une langue doit être parlée couramment. J'espère que ceux qui se sont éloignés de l'utilisation de l'inuktitut y reviendront... Ils doivent regagner leur fierté et la fierté de leurs origines. Ils doivent faire partie à nouveau... du tissu social de la communauté.

L'avant par Tulloch, 2004). Des considérations d'ordre pragmatique poussent les jeunes à perfectionner leur maîtrise de la langue. En effet, le transfert linguistique¹ vers l'anglais engendre des lacunes en communication, intégration et participation à la vie communautaire.

La perte

Le recul des langues autochtones au Canada est un phénomène bien documenté (p. ex., Comité permanent sur les affaires autochtones, 1990, CRPA, 1996; Norris, 2006). Si les régions, les communautés et les familles vivent ces changements de manière différente, les jeunes présentent généralement un niveau de maîtrise de la langue inférieur à celui de leurs parents². Ce recul est lié aux interactions fréquentes avec des populations non autochtones, au cours desquelles

dans ce domaine (cf. Burnaby et Hinton et Hale, 2001; Kaplan et Reyhner, 2002; Fishman, 1991; Baldauf, 1997). Je me donne donc pour mission de mieux comprendre les aspirations linguistiques des Inuits. Lors de ma première entrevue, la responsable inuite de l'élaboration des politiques citée plus haut (A1) révèle pourquoi le gouvernement semble déterminer à garantir l'accès à tous les Inuits à la connaissance, à l'apprentissage et à l'utilisation de cette langue ancestrale : la langue rassemble et unit les membres de la communauté. Sans elle, certains Inuits se sentent coupés du reste de la communauté : ils ne se sentent pas pleinement acceptés et n'ont pas l'occasion de participer pleinement à la vie communautaire. Les résultats de 40 entrevues tenues auprès de jeunes Inuits, de 130 questionnaires fermés et de 16 mois

de plus de 50 p. 100 de femmes) diminuaient considérablement le taux de suicide chez les jeunes. Comme l'indique la figure 4, les bandes qui représentaient les huit facteurs de contrainte culturelle affichaient des taux de suicide d'ordre zéro autant chez les jeunes que chez les adultes, tandis que celles qui ne présentaient aucun de ces facteurs ont connu des taux épidémiques de suicide.

Conclusion

Dans l'ensemble, ce programme de recherche étendu confirme deux grandes conclusions. D'abord, les allégations génériques à l'égard du taux de suicide chez les jeunes de toute société autochtone sont, pour le moins, des fictions actuelles qui dissimulent les différences entre les collectivités quant à la fréquence de ces décès. Ensuite, les continuités personnelle et culturelle sont fortement reliées, tant et si bien que les collectivités des Premières nations qui réussissent à préserver leur culture patrimoniale et qui s'efforcent de contrôler leur propre destinée parviennent à protéger leurs jeunes du suicide de façon radicale.

Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du PRP à www.recherchepolitique.gc.ca



Deuxième hypothèse : la continuité culturelle comme protection contre le suicide chez les jeunes Autochtones

La deuxième hypothèse découle de la supposition selon laquelle les groupes culturels distinctifs, comme les indigènes, sont constitués par des pratiques de préservation de l'identité qui forment des liens avec un passé et un avenir communs. D'après cette perspective, on a prédit que les collectivités des Premières nations privées de tels liens favorisant le maintien de la culture seraient particulièrement à risque au chapitre du suicide, tandis que celles qui ont réussi à préserver les liens culturels seraient mieux protégées des vicissitudes qui naissent de la part des jeunes Autochtones des soins et une attention réguliers afin d'assurer leur propre bien-être futur.

Deux vagues de données ont aussi été recueillies dans le but de tester cette hypothèse. Au cours de la première période (de 1987 à 1992), les données disponibles ont été attentivement examinées afin de repérer des variables à l'échelle communautaire qui soient descriptives des efforts collectifs en vue de préserver les liens avec un passé culturel commun et de bâtir un avenir culturel commun. Six marqueurs de continuité culturelle ont d'abord été déterminés, y compris les indications à savoir si les collectivités ont atteint une mesure d'autonomie, ont revendiqué des titres ancestraux sur des terres traditionnelles, ont établi un certain pouvoir communautaire sur la santé, l'éducation et les services de police, et ont créé des installations communautaires dédiées à la préservation de la culture. Le calcul d'après l'ensemble de ces mesures dichotomiques a donné un indice global de continuité culturelle variant de 0 à 6. Les taux moyens de suicide des bandes qui correspondent à un de

FIGURE 3

Taux de suicide chez les jeunes, par nombre de facteurs présents (1987-1992)

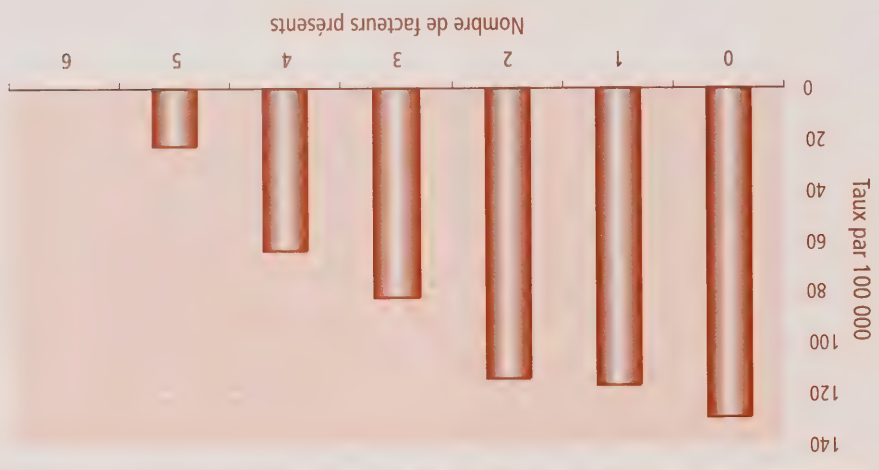


FIGURE 4

Taux total de suicide par nombre de facteurs présents (1993-2000)



ces degrés de continuité culturelle sont présentes à la figure 3. Les bandes qui présentent l'ensemble des facteurs de continuité culturelle n'ont enregistré *aucun* suicide chez les jeunes au cours de notre première fenêtre d'étude. Au contraire, les bandes qui ne présentaient aucun de ces facteurs « de protection » ont connu des taux de suicide beaucoup plus élevés que la moyenne nationale. Il a également été prouvé que l'ajout de mesures en matière de pouvoir communautaire sur les services de protection de l'enfance et la participation des femmes à la gouvernance des bandes (conseils de tribu composés

De la continuité personnelle à la continuité culturelle

Si, comme nous l'avancions, la continuité culturelle constitue un renfort contre les faiblesses normales de la nuit, s'offrent à nous.

un réseau d'hypothèses connexes (tandis que d'autres ne le sont pas), suicide de façon si disproportionnée Autochtones, sont touchés par le jeunes, en particulier certains jeunes à mieux comprendre pourquoi les cités ci-dessus nous permettent d'aider Dans la mesure où les commentaires suicide à un jeune âge.

mutilation et, ultime tragédie, le l'abus d'alcool et de drogues, l'auto-souvent la désillusion, la lassitude, plans personnel et culturel engendrent était propre. De telles pertes sur les milieu de vie a perdu tout ce qui lui d'origine ne compte plus et leur gênes à travers le monde. Leur culture qui guette de nombreux jeunes ind-complexe. C'est le sort, selon nous, la maturité devient beaucoup plus sables, de ce fait, la transition vers les au point de devenir méconnaissables en vertu d'une loi, ou assimili-

De telles pertes sur les plans personnel et culturel engendrent souvent la désillusion, la lassitude, l'abus d'alcool et de drogues, l'automutilation et, ultime tragédie, le suicide à un jeune âge.

d'individualité à partir des vestiges d'un mode de vie que des pratiques coloniales dures ont systématiquement renversé. Dans le meilleur des cas, un jeune peut se servir de sa culture comme d'un renfort – une certaine mesure d'identité alors qu'il délaisse ses comportements d'enfant. Si, au contraire, sa culture a été marginalisée (en raison de la colonisation, de la décolonisation ou de la mon-dialisation), les moyens fiables de sa communauté sont criminalisés,

Premièrement, comme les différentes collectivités autochtones ont surmonté différemment leurs contacts généralement négatifs avec le monde non-autochtone, leur réaction collective à de telles adversités devrait varier pareillement. Si on examine le problème spécifique du suicide chez les jeunes parmi les presque 200 bandes distinctes de la Colombie-Britannique, il devrait s'ensuivre que le taux d'occurrence du suicide chez les jeunes devrait également varier entre les collectivités.

Deuxièmement, parce que les collectivités ont réussi à réhabiliter leur culture à différents degrés, les taux de suicide devraient également être plus bas pour les bandes qui ont le mieux réussi à renouer avec leur passé traditionnel et à établir des liens avec un avenir commun.

Ces deux hypothèses ont maintenant été testées dans le cadre de deux vagues distinctes de collectes de données englobant les années 1987 à 2000. Pour chacune des études, tous les suicides confirmés d'Autochtones en Colombie-Britannique étaient classés par bande d'origine et chacune des

Résultats

197 bandes reconnues de la province était codée de façon dichotomique selon la présence ou l'absence de six et, ensuite, de huit facteurs de « continuité culturelle », décrits ci-dessous. Le sommaire des résultats de ces deux ensembles de données sont présentés dans les paragraphes qui suivent.

Première hypothèse : le taux de suicide chez les jeunes à l'échelle provinciale : une fiction actuarielle

Le taux de suicide observé chez la population des Premières nations de la Colombie-Britannique entre 1987 et 2000 était deux fois plus élevé que la moyenne provinciale. Si, contre toute logique, le taux de suicide n'était pas lié à l'appartenance à une bande, le calcul du taux de suicide pour chacune des bandes aurait donné une distribution plus ou moins rectangulaire. Cependant, comme l'indique la figure 1, il s'agit plutôt du contraire. La représentation en dents de scie indique clairement que beaucoup de collectivités autochtones de la Colombie-Britannique n'ont connu aucun suicide chez les jeunes (de 15 à 24 ans) entre 1987 et 2000 tandis que, dans d'autres collectivités, le taux était beaucoup plus élevé que la moyenne provinciale. La figure 2 présente un tableau du taux de suicide chez les jeunes par conseil de tribu. Ces données montrent que près de 90 p. 100 des suicides se produisent dans moins de 10 p. 100 des collectivités et que, dans plus de la moitié des bandes et 20 p. 100 des conseils de tribu, il n'y a pratiquement pas de suicides chez les jeunes. Il est manifeste que l'« épidémie » de suicides de suicides chez les jeunes par conseil de tribu.

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et d'autres pas.

actuarielles » qui souvent, cachent plus qu'elles ne révèlent. Représenter systématiquement l'ensemble des Premières nations du Canada (ou de la Colombie-Britannique) de la même façon dissimule la diversité culturelle bien réelle qui marque la vie des Autochtones et remplace à tort par la bannière d'« aboriginalité » un vaste ensemble de facteurs qui expliquerait mieux la variation des taux de suicide entre les collectivités des Premières nations.

Loin d'être distribué uniformément, le taux de suicide chez les jeunes Autochtones parmi les 200 bandes de la Colombie-Britannique présente en fait des variations en dents de scie (Chandler et Lalonde, 1998; Chandler *et al.*, 2003). C'est ce qui, depuis plus de dix ans, détermine les priorités de notre recherche, qui examine plus particulièrement les raisons pour lesquelles certaines collectivités autochtones présentent des taux épidémiques de suicide chez les jeunes tandis que d'autres présentent des taux pratiquement nuls.

Des antécédents

développementaux

La question à l'origine de la recherche était de savoir pourquoi le suicide est si fréquent chez les jeunes malgré tout ce que la vie peut offrir. Nos recherches initiales ont montré que le risque de suicide est lié à un ensemble de pièges qui marquent le cours naturel du développement de l'identité (Chandler et Ball, 1990). L'incapacité à développer un sentiment d'appartenance à un passé personnel et collectif et à s'engager envers ses propres perspectives d'avenir a été liée à un risque de suicide extrêmement élevé. En l'absence d'un sentiment de continuité personnelle et culturelle, nos études indiquent que la vie se déprécie rapidement et que la possibilité du suicide devient un choix envisageable.

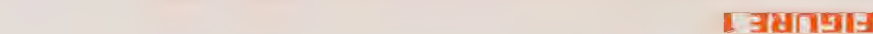
De la recherche normative à la recherche sur les risques et la résilience

Quels que soient les risques rencontrés au cours du développement, ils sont inévitablement amplifiés lorsque le contexte culturel dans lequel le développement se déroule naturellement s'effondre en raison d'adversités socio-culturelles. L'exemple le plus frappant est celui des jeunes Autochtones qui éprouvent des difficultés identitaires et qui doivent développer un sentiment

FIGURE 2 Taux de suicide chez les jeunes, par conseil de tribu (1987-2000)



FIGURE 1 Taux de suicide chez les jeunes, par bande (1987-2000)



Bande (les noms ne sont pas indiqués)

Conseil de tribu (les noms ne sont pas indiqués)

La continuité culturelle comme facteur de protection contre le suicide chez les jeunes des Premières nations

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Dans quelque passé légendaire et moins tumultueux, la tragédie du suicide chez les jeunes Autochtones du Canada était-elle moins présente qu'aujourd'hui? Il est à cette question. Par contre, les données actuelles (résolument portées à l'attention du public par la Commission royale sur les peuples autochtones) ne laissent planer aucun doute quant aux proportions catastrophiques qu'ont atteint les taux de suicide chez les jeunes de certaines collectivités des Premières nations, innuites et métisses, qu'on dit plus élevées que pour tout autre groupe culturel au monde (Kirmayer, 1994). L'incroyable vague d'inquiétude face à ces suicides qui a suivi la Commission royale a donné lieu à de nombreux rassemblements publics, programmes de recherche, rapports gouvernementaux et publications érudites. Bien qu'il soit impossible de résumer ici l'ensemble de cette documentation, il est néanmoins possible d'en tirer quelques conclusions afin d'éclairer la recherche et la pratique futures.

La conclusion la plus évidente est que le suicide chez les jeunes est tellement dévastateur pour les familles, les amis et les collectivités que rien ne freine, et ne devrait freiner, les initiatives visant à améliorer et à prévenir de telles tragédies. Cependant, compte tenu de notre empressement à vouloir aider, de telles initiatives devancent souvent les connaissances disponibles sur les causes réelles du suicide. Pour redresser la balance, nous devons consacrer une grande partie de nos ressources et de nos efforts collectifs à mieux comprendre les circonstances responsables des taux élevés de suicide chez les jeunes qui caractérisent certaines collectivités autochtones plutôt que d'autres.

Une deuxième conclusion émerge de la documentation disponible, à savoir que l'unité d'analyse la plus prometteuse n'est pas les jeunes mais plutôt l'ensemble des collectivités culturelles dans lesquelles ils vivent (Lester et Yang, 2006). En effet, compte tenu du fait que le suicide est statistiquement rare (même lorsqu'il est épidémique), il est presque impossible de prédire qui s'enlèvera la vie et qui ne le fera pas (Rosen, 1954); de plus, quoiqu'on ne sache pas vraiment comment modifier les pensées et les sentiments profonds des personnes suicidaires, ce qu'il faut pour répondre aux besoins pressants des collectivités autochtones qui présentent des taux de suicide extrêmement élevés chez les jeunes se trouve souvent sous nos yeux.

Conjointement, ces règles empiriques soulignent l'importance de chercher les facteurs liés à la variation entre les collectivités des taux de suicide chez les jeunes et ont déterminé l'orientation du programme de recherche sur dix ans résumé dans le présent article.

La continuité culturelle et le suicide chez les jeunes des Premières nations

Les décès chez les jeunes Autochtones sont souvent dus au suicide, puisqu'ils ont par ailleurs une santé partiellement robuste. Le suicide est la deuxième cause de décès en importance chez les jeunes Autochtones après les « accidents » (Statistique Canada, 2001). En Colombie-Britannique, par exemple, où les données qui nous intéressent ont été recueillies, le taux de suicide chez les jeunes des Premières nations est de 5 à 20 fois plus élevé que chez les autres jeunes (Chandler *et al.*, 2003). De telles statistiques sombres, bien que techniquement justes, doivent être considérées comme des « fictions

des frissons lorsqu'ils entendent notre fille chanter la version crie d'*O Canada*. C'est comme si vous aviez dit une prière au créateur. »⁷

Notes

- 1 Sources consultées le 8 juin 2007 :
www.cbc.ca/canada/edmonton/story/2007/02/01/ocanada-cree.html
www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2007/02/03/cree-hockey.html
www.cbc.ca/clips/mov/jiwan-singer/070203.mov
www.cbc.ca/radishows/AS_IT_HAPPENS/20070205.shtml
 2 Source : www.schoolnet.ca/abortiginal/issues/schools-e.html.
 3 Il faut être prudent lorsqu'on compare les populations autochtones d'un recensement à l'autre à cause de la mobilité ethnique au sein de ces populations. De plus, les comparaisons des données sur les langues autochtones d'un recensement à l'autre peuvent être sujettes à des écarts concernant la zone d'observation, les recensements incomplets, les rapports, le contenu et les questions, qui ont été contrôlés dans la mesure du possible.
 4 Les perspectives de transmission d'une langue maternelle peuvent être évaluées grâce à un indice de continuité (HL/TM) qui mesure le rapport entre le nombre de personnes qui parlent la langue à la maison pour 100 personnes dont c'est la langue maternelle. Un taux inférieur à 100 indique un déclin de la vitalité de la langue (c. à-d. que, pour 100 personnes qui possèdent une langue maternelle autochtone, moins de 100 personnes de la population globale parlent cette langue à la maison). Plus l'indice est faible, plus le déclin ou l'érosion de la langue est important.
 5 Pour plus de renseignements sur les langues viables et les langues menacées, voir Kinkade (1991) et Norris (1998), 2005, 2006, 2007). Kinkade décrit cinq états pour les langues autochtones du Canada : disparues; près de disparaître; menacées; viables, mais ayant une petite base de population; viables.
 6 L'indice d'acquisition de la langue seconde, ou indice d'habileté (CN/LM), compare le nombre de personnes qui disent pouvoir parler la langue au nombre de personnes dont c'est la langue maternelle autochtone. Si pour tous les 100 locuteurs d'une langue maternelle autochtone donnée plus de 100 personnes sur l'ensemble de la population peuvent parler la langue, alors certaines de ces personnes ont acquis cette
 7 Traduction libre de www.cbc.ca/canada/edmonton/story/2007/02/01/ocanada-cree.html (consultation : 8 juin 2007).
 Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du RRP à www.recherchepolitique.gc.ca

la présence de jeunes locuteurs [...] Par exemple, en 2001, pratiquement aucune des 500 personnes pouvant parler le tsimshian n'avait moins de 25 ans, bien que 32 % d'entre elles étaient des locuteurs de langue seconde. » (Norris, 2007, p. 24)

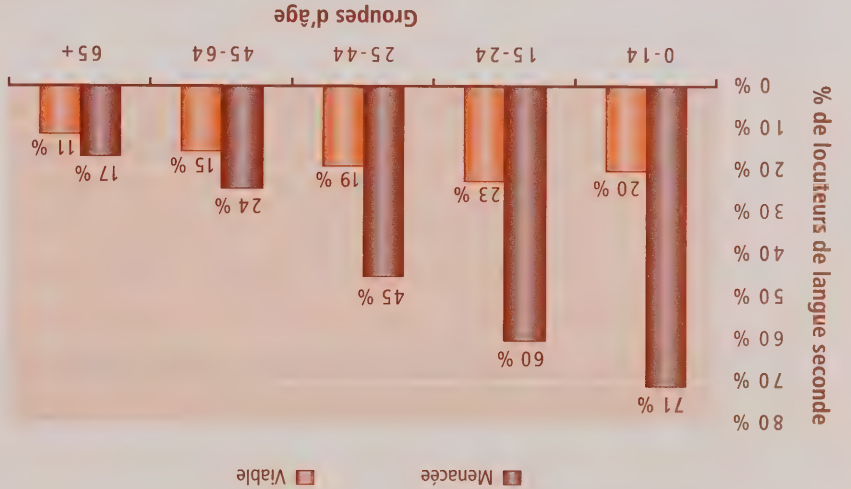
Au bout du compte, il faut se réjouir des tendances montrant un intérêt renouvelé chez les jeunes Autochtones envers la revitalisation des langues autochtones. Parler la langue traditionnelle des ancêtres donne aux jeunes la possibilité de communiquer avec les membres plus âgés de leur famille; le maintien des cultures traditionnelles est ainsi assuré. L'ap- prentissage d'une langue autochtone contribue également à améliorer l'estime des jeunes, le bien-être de la communauté et à assurer la continuité culturelle (Chandler, 2006; Patrimoine canadien, 2005).

Si l'acquisition d'une langue seconde par la jeunesse d'aujourd'hui naît d'une nécessité démographique gran- dissante, elle reflète également un intérêt accru et des occasions de renouvellement. Le temps nous dira si ce phénomène engendrera de nou- velles générations de locuteurs ou s'il représente le début d'un déclin à venir. Le rôle important de la jeunesse dans la survie des langues autochtones est bien exprimé par les parents de la jeune fille qui a chanté l'hymne natio- nal canadien en cri en février 2007 : « Ce sont de bonnes nouvelles pour les Autochtones... Les ancêtres ont

moins leur langue à la maison, les chances qu'ils transmettent cette langue comme langue maternelle à leurs enfants tendront à diminuer. Cependant, le simple fait de parler la langue autochtone régulièrement pourrait contribuer à sa continuité (Norris et Jantzen, 2003), ou, du moins, permettre aux enfants de connaître leur langue ancestrale à titre de langue seconde. Enfin, on ne peut passer sous silence le vieillisse- ment des locuteurs d'une langue seconde très menacée : « Les propor- tions élevées de locuteurs de langue seconde ne signifient pas toujours

leur langue deviendra la langue maternelle de leurs enfants. Les jeunes locuteurs Autochtones de langue seconde seront confrontés à un problème de taille, surtout pour la revitalisation des langues menacées : seront-ils capables, en tant que parents, de transmettre à leurs enfants la connaissance de leur langue seconde? Ces futurs parents éprouveront certaines difficultés selon leur degré de maîtrise de la langue et l'utilisation qu'ils en font quotidien- nement à la maison ou dans la com- munité. S'ils utilisent de moins en

FIGURE 6 Pourcentage des locuteurs de langue seconde pour les langues menacées et viables, Canada, 2001



Source : Recensement de 2001, Norris (2007) (CST).

TABLEAU 1

Indicateurs choisis (jeunes)¹ pour la vitalité des langues autochtones², langues viables et menacées, Recensement de 2001, Canada

	2001	2001	2001	Indicateurs choisis (jeunes) ¹ : 1996 % d'enfants locuteurs ou avec capacité : langue maternelle, langue parlée à la maison, et âge moyen en 2001	
Langues autochtones	Langue maternelle	Indice de continuité	Indice de capacité/langue seconde	Langue maternelle	Langue à la maison
				âge des enfants	âge des enfants
				% des enfants	% des enfants

Toutes les langues autochtones					
	203 300	64	120	93,7	32,1
				%	%
Famille algonquienne	142 090	62	120	94,5	32,5
Crî?	80 075	62	121	96,7	32,4
Ojibway?	23 520	45	130	87,1	38,0
Montagnais-Naskapi	9 890	91	106	98,5	26,0
Micmac	7 650	65	117	96,0	31,3
Ojî-Crî?	9 875	73	106	95,9	26,2
Attkamek	4 725	95	105	96,9	22,7
Pied-Noir	3 025	56	149	90,7	40,8
Algonquin	1 860	30	130	89,5	30,2
Macéte	825	33	133	86,8	40,6
Algonquian N.I.A.	645	19	154	n/a	44,1
Famille inuktitut	29 695	82	110	98,1	25,0
Famille athabascane	18 530	63	121	90,9	33,1
Déné	9 595	81	110	94,4	27,2
Esclave du Sud ⁴	1 460	39	151	93,0	37,8
Dogrib	1 925	70	119	96,7	29,3
Carrier	1 445	34	142	88,7	43,4
Chipewyan	655	27	144	79,8	45,8
Athabaskan, N.I.A.	1 210	22	140	80,7	41,5
Chilcotin	1 010	53	113	90,0	37,3
Kutchin-Gwich'in (Loucheux)	365	15	137	74,4	50,4
Esclave du Nord (Hare) ⁴	865	55	119	n/a	35,7
Famille dakota (Sioux)	4 310	66	115	83,1	31,9
Famille salish	3 210	20	156	67,5	41,5
Salish N.I.A.	1 920	21	157	41,2	41,2
Shuswap	815	19	154	39,4	39,4
Thompson	475	18	151	46,5	46,5
Famille Tsimshian	2 030	26	135	89,8	48,8
Giksan	1 000	31	132	45,7	45,7
Nishga	600	23	153	46,9	46,9
Tsimshian	430	21	117	61,4	61,4
Famille wakash	1 445	14	123	52,5	48,8
Wakash	980	18	130	48,7	48,7
Nootka	465	6	109	49,1	49,1
Famille iroquoienne ⁵	670	8	150	43,8	37,7
Mohawk	425	8	178	35,4	42,5
Iroquois N.I.A.	245	8	102	45,0	45,0
Isolat haïda	165	6	164	64,7	48,8
(les 3 isolats)	129	29	129	64,7	41,5
Isolat kutenai	170	5	219	41,4	41,4
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- Notes du Tableau 1 :
1. Les indicateurs – indice de continuité, indice de capacité et âge moyen de la population de langue maternelle et de la langue parlée à la maison – sont basés sur toutes les réponses, simples et multiples (pour la langue maternelle et la langue parlée à la maison).
 2. L'état « viable » des langues individuelles se base sur le classement de M. Dale Kinkade, « The Decline of Native Languages in Canada », *Endangered Languages* (1991).
 3. Quatre réserves au Manitoba ont connu des changements de comportement de réponse pour le cri, l'ojibwa et l'ojibway entre 1996 et 2001.
 4. Des changements de procédures dans la codification entre 1996 et 2001 empêchent de comparer les données des deux recensements pour les langues Esclave du Nord et Esclave du Sud.
 5. Les données pour la famille iroquoienne ne sont pas très représentatives étant donné l'effet important des recensements incomplets des réserves pour cette famille linguistique. D'autres langues, comme celles de la famille algonquienne, peuvent être affectées dans une certaine mesure par un mauvais recensement.
- Source : Totalisations personnalisées des recensements de 1996 et de 2001. Adapté de Norris (1998, 2007).

de tous âges de parler leur langue, et ce, pour les jeunes, les parents et les adultes, à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur des communautés autochtones. Si les résultats de l'EPA renforcent l'importance du rôle des parents et de l'utilisation de la langue à la maison, ils soulignent également d'autres sources d'apprentissage importantes pour les enfants, soit la famille élargie (tantes, oncles, grands-parents) et d'autres personnes comme les professeurs et la communauté (Norris, 2004). Même pour les langues relativement en santé, comme l'inuktitut, les jeunes qui souhaitent conserver la maîtrise de leur langue ont besoin du soutien des familles, de la communauté et des milieux d'enseignement ainsi que d'occasions d'apprentissage, d'écoute et d'utilisation de la langue (Tulloch, 2005).

Pour que ces tendances encouragent les jeunes à maintenir leur langue maternelle et à la maison lorsqu'ils seront en âge de fonder une famille; ainsi, ils s'assuront que

L'apprentissage d'une langue autochtone contribue également à améliorer l'estime des jeunes, le bien-être de la communauté et à assurer la continuité culturelle.

parents, ces jeunes auront la responsabilité de la survie de la langue, de la culture, des traditions et de l'identité de leurs descendants.

Des signes encourageants ressortent de la croissance de l'acquisition de la langue seconde, particulièrement lorsque le nombre de locuteurs augmente grâce à un afflux de jeunes. On peut en déceler un fort désir chez les jeunes d'apprendre la langue traditionnelle et la présence de soutien et d'occasions en ce sens. Ces conséquences correspondent aux résultats de l'Enquête auprès des peuples autochtones de 2001 (EPA) qui a montré qu'il était important pour les Autochtones

Une jeunesse qui maintient les langues autochtones pour les générations futures

Les caractéristiques linguistiques des jeunes Autochtones d'aujourd'hui auront une incidence importante sur les perspectives des langues autochtones au Canada, en particulier les langues menacées. En tant que futurs

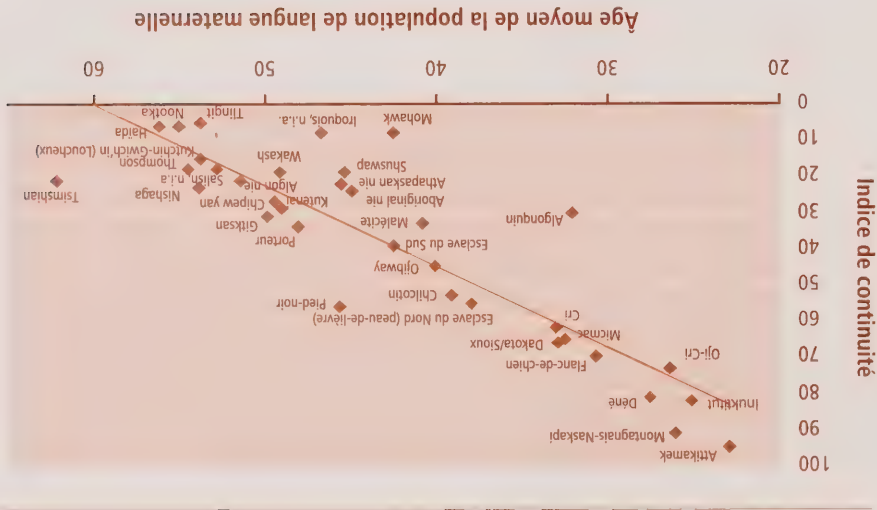
Les parents locuteurs de certaines langues menacées ont une forte tendance à s'assurer que leurs enfants détiennent un minimum de connaissances de leur langue ancestrale, même si sa transmission à titre de langue maternelle est faible (Norris et MacCon, 2003). D'un point de vue démographique, la transmission à titre de langue seconde devient une solution nécessaire aux langues menacées

et reflète deux phénomènes : plusieurs populations de langue maternelle dépassent l'âge de procréation et, pour la majorité des enfants, les conditions familiales et communautaires idéales pour la transmission de la langue maternelle se raréfient. La figure 6 montre à quel point les locuteurs de langue seconde représentent un segment important des locuteurs de langues menacées. De 1996 à 2001, le groupe linguistique salish a subi une baisse de 5 % de sa population de langue maternelle tout en affichant une hausse impressionnante de 17 % du nombre total de locuteurs (Norris, 2007).

L'acquisition de la langue seconde est de plus en plus importante au plan communautaire, surtout parce que les populations utilisant leur langue maternelle vieillissent et dépassent l'âge de procréation. Entre 1996 et 2001, la proportion des communautés où la majorité des locuteurs ont appris une langue maternelle autochtone est passée des deux tiers à moins de la moitié, alors que la proportion des communautés où la majorité des locuteurs ont acquis une langue seconde autochtone a doublé, passant de 8,5 à 17 %. Le tiers des communautés recensées en 2001 pourraient être considérées en transition d'une population de langue maternelle à une population de langue seconde (Norris, 2006). Les effets de l'acquisition de la langue seconde sont majoritairement forts à l'extérieur des communautés autochtones et dans les zones urbaines : 165 Indiens inscrits âgés de 10 à 14 ans résidents à l'extérieur d'une réserve parlent une langue maternelle des Premières nations alors qu'on en trouve 115 dans les réserves, ceci suppose que les jeunes vivant à l'extérieur des communautés autochtones sont plus susceptibles d'acquérir leur langue autochtone comme langue seconde que les jeunes vivant dans les réserves (Norris et Jantzen, 2002).

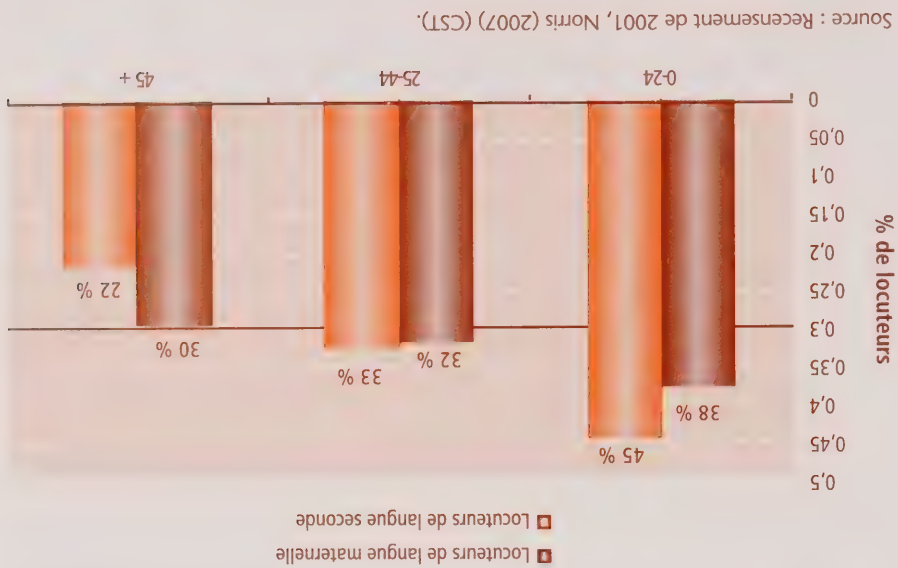
La croissance de l'acquisition de la langue seconde est importante pour la viabilité à long terme des langues, étant donné le déclin observé chez les populations de langue maternelle. La famille linguistique tlingit, par exemple, a l'une des populations de langue maternelle les plus âgées avec une moyenne avoisinant 54 ans, mais son indice d'acquisition de la langue seconde est de 219 et la moyenne d'âge de tous les locuteurs est de 41 ans. Ainsi, les jeunes générations sont plus enclines à apprendre le tlingit comme langue seconde (tableau 1).

FIGURE 4
Indice de la continuité des langues selon l'âge moyen de la population de langue maternelle, Canada 2001



Source : Recensement de 2001, Norris (2007).

FIGURE 5
Distribution des locuteurs de langue maternelle et de langue seconde selon le groupe d'âge, Canada, 2001



Source : Recensement de 2001, Norris (2007) (CST).

FIGURE 3 Continuité des langues autochtones et pourcentage des enfants issus de mariages mixtes, par origine autochtone d'un ou des parents, Canada, 1996



Source : Recensement de 1996, Norris et MacCon (2003).
Note : Puisque cet article se base sur un recensement, nous avons choisi d'adopter la terminologie des langues et le style utilisés dans ce recensement.

élevés de mariages mixtes (90 % en moyenne). Le cri, la principale langue des Premières nations, enregistre un indice de continuité de la langue de 70 % et un taux de mariages mixtes de 30 % (Norris, 2003). Les conséquences sont également liées au lieu de résidence : parmi les familles endogames, la proportion d'enfants qui ont une langue maternelle autochtone est plus élevée dans les réserves (68 %) et d'autres communautés rurales (77 %) que dans les grandes villes, où elle chute à 41 % (Norris, 2003). Enfin, les différences notées chez les jeunes Autochtones reflètent la diversité et la viabilité des différentes langues, qui présentent des écarts importants d'état, de tendance et

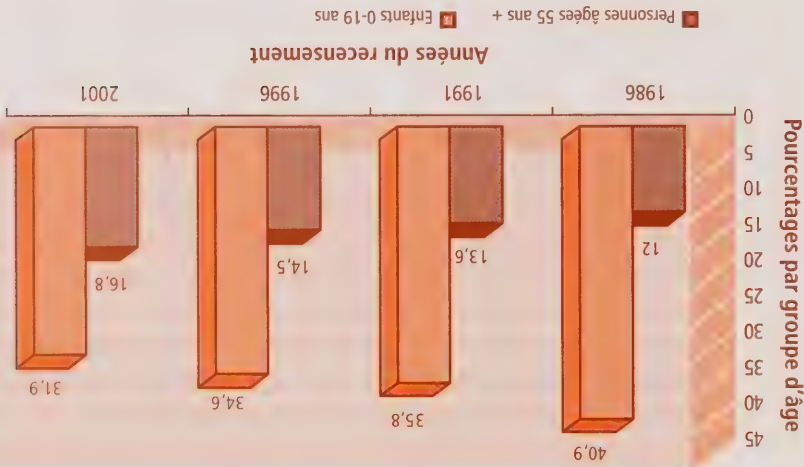
d'orientation⁵. La figure 4 illustre la forte relation linéaire inverse entre l'indice de continuité de la langue et l'âge moyen de la population de langue maternelle. Les langues viables comme l'attikamek, l'inuktitut et le déné se caractérisent par des populations de langue maternelle plutôt jeunes et des indices de continuité élevés. À l'opposé, les langues menacées comme l'haïda, le kutenai et le tlingit ont des populations plus âgées et des indices de continuité très bas, et des caractéristiques qui ont persisté entre le recensement de 1996 et celui de 2001 (Norris, 2003, 2007). Globalement, ces tendances indiquent qu'un bon nombre de langues autochtones – y compris les principales – seront soumises à un indice décroissant

Acquisition d'une langue seconde : un contrepois au déclin de la langue maternelle

Les jeunes Autochtones ont beaucoup moins tendance à parler une langue autochtone que leurs aînés, et parmi les jeunes locuteurs, cette langue s'acquiert de plus en plus à titre de langue seconde (Norris, 2003, 2007). La figure 5 montre que, si les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones de moins de 25 ans représentent 38 % des locuteurs d'une langue maternelle autochtone, ils forment environ 45 % de locuteurs d'une langue seconde autochtone. Ces pourcentages contrastent avec ceux observés chez les personnes de 45 ans et plus (figure 5) (Norris, 2007). L'indice d'acquisition de la langue seconde⁶ montre qu'au Canada, pour 100 jeunes Autochtones qui possèdent une langue maternelle autochtone, il y en a 121 qui parlent une langue autochtone, ce qui signifie que pour certains d'entre eux, cette langue est supérieure à celui des locuteurs de langue seconde est passé de 117 en 1996 à 120 en 2001.

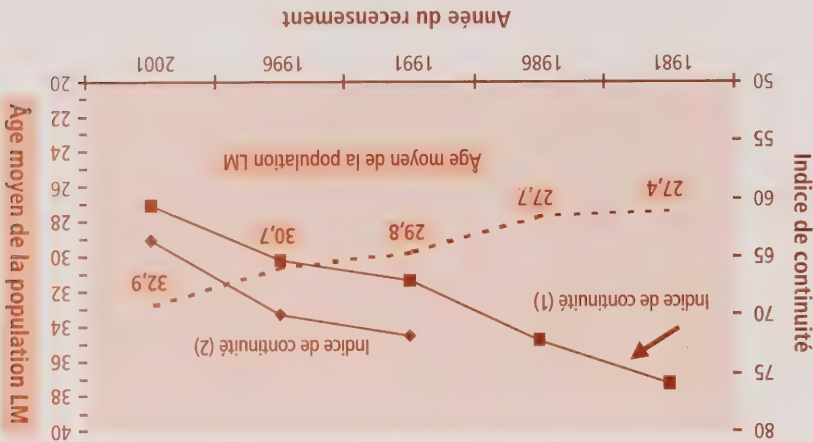
sant de continuité de la langue maternelle dans les générations à venir. En 2001, seulement 13 % de la population autochtone rapportait qu'elle parlait une langue autochtone « le plus souvent » à la maison, et 5 % sur une base « régulière » (Norris et Jantzen, 2003). Dans le cas des langues menacées, sans un effort de revitalisation, l'extinction pourrait se produire dans la génération suivante; dans le cas des langues actuellement viables, des problèmes de continuité pourraient se manifester au sein des générations les plus jeunes.

FIGURE 1
Composition par âge de la population de langue maternelle autochtone : proportion représentée par les enfants et les personnes âgées, de 1986 à 2001



Source : recensements de 1986 à 2001, Norris (2003).

FIGURE 2
Langues autochtones : indice de continuité et âge moyen de la population de langue maternelle autochtone (LM), Canada, 1981 à 2001



Notes :

(1) Selon les réponses uniques aux questions sur la langue maternelle et langue parlée à la maison.
(2) Selon les réponses uniques et multiples.

Source : recensements de 1981 à 2001, Norris (2003).

Le déclin de la transmission de la langue maternelle est une conséquence importante d'un grand nombre de facteurs. Tout d'abord, l'utilisation de la langue à la maison. Des 58 000 enfants (de 5 à 14 ans en 1996) dont un des parents possédait une langue maternelle autochtone, plus de 90 % avaient les connaissances nécessaires pour communiquer dans la langue maternelle de ce parent; toutefois, seulement 47 % possédaient la langue maternelle autochtone de ce parent, alors qu'un pourcentage encore plus faible (38 %) parlait la langue maternelle autochtone à la maison.

La continuité de la langue maternelle autochtone est aussi liée au cycle de vie et en particulier aux transitions de la jeunesse à l'âge adulte. L'analyse par cohorte des données de recensement montre que le déclin le plus prononcé dans l'utilisation des langues autochtones à la maison s'est produit chez les jeunes femmes âgées de 20 à 24 ans en 1981 et de 35 à 39 ans en 1996. Cette importante constatation souligne le fait que ces années correspondent, pour ces femmes, au départ du domicile familial, à l'entrée sur le marché du travail, au mariage, à la formation d'une famille ou au déménagement en milieu urbain (Norris, 1998).

La baisse de l'indice de continuité de la langue est particulièrement liée aux mariages mixtes. La figure 3 illustre la forte relation linéaire inverse entre la continuité de la langue et le mariage mixte. Les langues viables qui ont un taux élevé de continuité (plus de 80 %) sont caractérisées par un faible pourcentage de mariages mixtes (moins de 20 %); parmi elles, on compte l'atitkamek, le montagnais-naskapi et l'inuktitut. À l'opposé, les langues menacées comme l'haida, le tlingit et le kutenai ont des taux très faibles de continuité de la langue (20 % et moins) et des taux très

La voix des jeunes Autochtones d'aujourd'hui

Maintenir les langues autochtones vivantes pour les générations futures

Mary Jane Norris
Gestionnaire principale
de la recherche
Direction de la recherche
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Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

Le 3 février 2007 à Calgary, en Alberta, une fillette de 13 ans

des Premières nations écrit une page de l'histoire en chantant l'hymne national canadien en cri avant une partie de la Ligue nationale de hockey¹. Cet événement remarquable survient à un moment où les enfants et les jeunes Autochtones du Canada concentrent leurs efforts, à la maison ou à l'école, pour apprendre et parler leurs langues traditionnelles. De ce fait, ils contribuent à une sensibilisation grandissante envers l'état des langues autochtones au pays. Comme le montre cet article, on doit encourager ces développements positifs même si, pendant ce temps, les langues autochtones du Canada sont confrontées à d'énormes difficultés.

Contexte : déclin de

la transmission intergénérationnelle des langues autochtones

Historiquement, les jeunes Autochtones se sont heurtés à des obstacles considérables lorsqu'ils voulaient utiliser leur langue, particulièrement au moment où les langues autochtones étaient interdites dans les pensionnats². Les obstacles d'aujourd'hui diffèrent, mais les effets des politiques d'autrefois se font toujours sentir, combinés à de nouveaux défis et obstacles importants quant à la revitalisation et au maintien des langues traditionnelles.

Plus encore que les générations précédentes, la jeunesse autochtone actuelle lutte contre l'influence de l'anglais et du français, langues dominantes dans les médias, la culture populaire et sur le marché du travail. De plus, des facteurs démographiques et géographiques peuvent fragiliser la transmission intergénérationnelle des langues autochtones : actuellement, un peu plus de 10 % seulement des enfants et des jeunes Autochtones

vivent dans des conditions « idéales » d'apprentissage de leur langue maternelle, c'est-à-dire dans une communauté autochtone où leurs deux parents ont une langue maternelle autochtone (Norris, 2007). On observe un déclin de la transmission intergénérationnelle des langues autochtones parmi les dernières générations : l'analyse des résultats du recensement de 2001 montre que, parmi les gens de 65 ans et plus qui se définissaient comme Autochtones, 44 % se disaient capables de parler une langue autochtone et 40 % possédaient une langue maternelle autochtone. Par comparaison, seulement 20 % des enfants et jeunes Autochtones de moins de 25 ans maîtrisaient une langue autochtone et 16 % possédaient une langue maternelle autochtone.

Au Canada, les enfants constituent la principale source de croissance de la population de langue maternelle autochtone. Toutefois, les résultats du recensement indiquent un ralentissement de la croissance de cette population malgré un taux de natalité relativement élevé des Autochtones. La baisse constante de l'utilisation des langues autochtones à la maison réduit la possibilité pour les jeunes d'acquiescer leur langue traditionnelle comme langue maternelle. Pour la première fois depuis 1981, la population utilisant sa langue maternelle a diminué, passant de 208 600 en 1996 à 203 900 en 2001. La proportion des enfants (de 0 à 19 ans) de la population de langue maternelle autochtone a chuté de 41 % en 1986 à seulement 32 % en 2001 (Norris, 2003; voir figure 1)³. De 1981 à 2001, la possibilité de transmission d'une langue maternelle, selon l'indice de continuité, est passée de 76 locuteurs utilisant la langue à la maison pour 100 locuteurs de langue maternelle à seulement 61 locuteurs⁴ (voir figure 2).

Thomas Edwards

25 ans, Ojibway, Première nation du lac Manitoba, éducation et théâtre, modèle en 2004-2005



Mes étudiants et les jeunes avec qui j'ai travaillé, qui proviennent de Winnipeg et de la Première nation du lac Manitoba, ont contribué à mon succès. Je prends aussi exemple sur plusieurs membres de ma famille qui m'aident à rester fort et à réussir : notamment ma tante Joyce, mon oncle Peter ainsi que ma marraine et mon parrain Paulette et Jacques Dupont. Je peux aussi compter sur les encouragements d'organisations, comme le Festival du Voyageur, qui m'ont accepté dans leur famille. Si je n'avais pas eu ces gens et ces groupes de soutien dans ma vie, je ne serais pas là où je suis aujourd'hui.

Selon moi, les jeunes Autochtones auront davantage leur mot à dire dans tous les aspects de la vie au Canada. Tant et aussi longtemps que nous continuerons à leur montrer la voie à suivre et à les aider, ils deviendront de plus en plus forts. Ils doivent savoir qu'ils peuvent réussir autant que n'importe qui d'autre. Les jeunes Autochtones d'aujourd'hui s'expriment haut et fort, et le feront de plus en plus au fur et à mesure qu'ils gagneront en maturité.

L'occasion de la Journée nationale des Autochtones, le 21 juin 2007. Les jeunes modèles pour 2007-2008 sont : Suzette Amaya, de la nation Gwa'Sala-Nakwaxda'xw (Colombie-Britannique), Julie Bull, d'Happy Valley-Goose Bay (Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador), Carissa Copenace, de la Première nation de Rainy River (Ontario), Jessica Dunkley, de Vancouver (Colombie-Britannique), Jordan Fleury, de Brandon (Manitoba), Gloria Kowtak, de Whale Cove

(Nunavut), Shawn Kuliktana, de Kugluktuk (Nunavut), Candice Lys, de Fort Smith (Territoires du Nord-Ouest), Anna Nelson, de la Première nation Anishinaabe de Roseau River (Manitoba) Alwyn Piche, de La Loche (Saskatchewan), Charlie Tookalu, d'Umiujaq (Québec), et Vanessa Webb, de Nain (Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador). Un nouveau porte-parole national a été choisi cette année comme ambassadeur du programme, James

Makokis, de la nation crie de Saddle Lake (Alberta), étudie actuellement la médecine à l'Université d'Ottawa. Il détient un baccalauréat en sciences en nutrition et en science alimentaire de l'Université de l'Alberta ainsi qu'une maîtrise en sciences en nutrition de Toronto. En mars 2007, James Makokis a reçu le prix décenné aux jeunes leaders par la Fondation nationale des réalisations autochtones. Pour de plus amples renseignements, prière de s'adresser à :

Karin Ketter

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Programme national des modèles
autochtones

Organisation nationale de la santé
autochtone

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<<http://www.nahc.ca/roketmodel/>

trench/index.php

Jessica Dunkley

28 ans, Métisse, étudiante en deuxième année de médecine à l'Université d'Ottawa, modèle en 2007-2008



J'ai grandi en ne sachant que peu de choses sur ma culture. Comme je suis sourde, je ne pouvais pas comprendre les histoires de mon grand-père sur sa vie en terre manitobaine. Cependant, quand j'ai rencontré James Makokis, qui est devenu par la suite le porte-parole du Programme national des modèles autochtones pour l'ensemble du pays, j'ai commencé à mieux comprendre notre peuple et la dynamique de notre culture. L'attachement sincère de James pour sa langue, son peuple et ses traditions m'a permis d'enrichir mes connaissances. Ses histoires à propos de sa culture et de sa famille m'ont incitée à redécouvrir l'identité que j'avais presque perdue avant de le rencontrer.

De nos jours, il y a beaucoup plus d'espoir pour les jeunes Autochtones qui se sentent défavorisés. Ceux qui sont handicapés ou en servant d'exemple, je pourrai donner à nos jeunes la confiance que tout est possible dans la vie. Nous devons éliminer les préjugés ou l'opprobre dont sont victimes les Autochtones handicapés. Nous devons montrer à tout le monde ce dont nous sommes capables, et les jeunes Autochtones aussi. Ils ont le pouvoir de réaliser leurs rêves.

PNMA. La cérémonie était présidée par Son Excellence, la très honorable Michaëlle Jean, gouverneure générale du Canada, qui a récompensé les personnalités modèles en décrétant à chacune une petite sculpture de cristal. « Vous que nous honorons ici, aujourd'hui, représentez une source d'espoir pour tant de gens, aussi bien dans vos collectivités respectives qu'à l'échelle du pays », a déclaré la gouverneure

générale dans le discours qu'elle a prononcé à l'occasion de la cérémonie. « Les choix que vous avez faits et l'acharnement avec lequel vous accomplissez votre travail au quotidien démontrent clairement aux membres des collectivités métisses, inuites et des Premières nations qu'il est possible de réussir au Canada, tout en demeurant fidèles à vos traditions culturelles, qui sont les plus anciennes sur ce continent. »

« Le Programme national des modèles autochtones a changé ma vie, a déclaré Thomas Edwards, personnalité modèle en 2004-2005. En plus d'avoir la chance de rencontrer d'autres jeunes et de leur raconter mon histoire, j'ai été inspiré par leurs histoires et ils m'ont rendu fier d'être un jeune des Premières nations. »

Parmi les candidatures au programme cette année, on remarque plusieurs universitaires, des athlètes vedettes et de jeunes bénévoles, ainsi qu'un pilote en herbe, une actrice amatrice, des interprètes de la danse des clochettes, un prodige de la science, une étudiante en médecine, un jeune leader Métis, un agent de la GRC et un membre auxiliaire de la GRC. Tout au long de l'année, les candidats choisis agissent à titre de conférenciers motivateurs. Ils visitent des communautés, participent à des conférences et d'autres manifestations ainsi qu'à des activités scolaires pour raconter leur histoire à d'autres jeunes Autochtones. Des affiches et des cartes de collection à l'effigie des leaders sont produites et distribuées aux communautés autochtones, aux écoles et aux centres d'amitié. Depuis que l'Organisation nationale de la santé autochtone a commencé à coordonner le programme, il y a quatre ans, 36 jeunes Autochtones ont été nommés modèles. Bon nombre des anciens participants du programme estiment que cette expérience a changé leur vie.

Poursuis ton chemin! Le Programme national des modèles autochtones encourage les jeunes Autochtones à atteindre leurs buts et à mener une vie saine

Le Programme national des modèles autochtones (PNMA) est un programme exceptionnel orchestré par l'Organisation nationale de la santé autochtone. Il célèbre le leadership, l'innovation et les réalisations des jeunes Métis, Inuits et de Premières nations âgés de 13 à 30 ans. Son thème, « *Poursuis ton chemin* », inspire les jeunes Autochtones à travailler pour atteindre leurs buts.

Le PNMA veut promouvoir un mode de vie sain et l'estime de soi chez les Autochtones, raffermir le sentiment d'appartenance des Autochtones et amener le public à avoir une image positive des Autochtones. En octobre 2006, lors d'une cérémonie à Rideau Hall, 12 jeunes Autochtones de tous les coins du pays ont été choisis comme modèles dans le cadre du

Jodie-Lynn Waddilove

31 ans, Munsee-Delaware Nation, Ontario, avocate spécialisée en contentieux des affaires civiles et en droit des sociétés à Toronto, Ontario, modèle en 2005-2006



C'est principalement à mes parents que je dois ma réussite. Je suis née et j'ai grandi dans une petite Première nation dans le sud de l'Ontario. Je ne connaissais aucun avocat ou professionnel du droit quand j'étais petite et mes parents n'ont pas fait d'études postsecondaires. Ils se dévouaient toutefois corps et âme à leurs enfants. Ils nous ont appris à être fiers de notre identité et de notre culture, à faire preuve d'une grande éthique du travail, à poursuivre nos études et à combattre les stéréotypes relatifs aux peuples autochtones, surtout ceux qui ont trait aux membres de Premières nations vivant dans les réserves. La fierté et les valeurs qu'ils m'ont transmises m'ont donné la force de réussir contre toute attente et de devenir avocate à 26 ans. En tant qu'avocate exerçant ma profession dans le système de justice canadien, je sais qu'un plus grand nombre de nos enfants pourront atteindre leurs objectifs s'ils reçoivent le soutien et les encouragements que moi j'ai eus.

Ce que je souhaite le plus aux jeunes Autochtones, c'est de savoir qu'ils peuvent réussir et d'y croire. Le plus important, c'est qu'ils réussissent en étant fiers de leur identité et en vivant selon leur culture et leurs traditions. Je sais d'expérience qu'ils devront affronter de nombreux obstacles, notamment la négativité, le racisme, le sexisme et les stéréotypes. Cependant, ils peuvent les surmonter et persévérer. De nombreux Autochtones sont parvenus à accomplir de grandes choses et de nombreux autres marcheront dans leurs pas.

pour fonder et entretenir un environnement familial sain.

Entretiens les liens lorsque les circonstances changent. Les pères autochtones éprouvent souvent des difficultés à entretenir des liens avec leurs enfants à long terme pour différentes raisons : déménagement pour le travail ou les études, toxicomanie, incarcération ou itinérance. Aussi, bien des pères sont oubliés lorsque des organismes interviennent en cas de séparation et de divorce, de protection de l'enfance, de placement familial et d'adoption (Gough, Blackstock et Bala, 2005). Il faut déployer plus d'efforts pour identifier, localiser et rejoindre les pères d'enfants prestataires de services sociaux ou pris en charge par l'État pour qu'ils s'investissent davantage dans leur vie. Pour renforcer les liens entre père et enfant, des sources de financement sont nécessaires pour créer des programmes à cette fin et destinés aux pères autochtones et à leurs enfants. Des réformes s'imposent également pour accroître la transparence des lois et l'accès à l'aide juridique pour les pères concernés par des décisions de garde d'enfant, de droits de visite et de tutelle.

Tournés vers l'avenir

Avoir des attentes positives, être à l'écoute des jeunes et les rejoindre par des modèles positifs et des mesures de soutien pertinentes aidera les jeunes pères autochtones à s'engager positivement dans la vie de leurs enfants. L'étude présentée ici constitue un premier pas qui illustre le fait que de nombreux hommes autochtones sont avides de participer à la recherche et de raconter leur histoire de paternité. Un programme de recherche plus approfondi pourrait aider à comprendre les différents déterminants de la paternité, dont des structures familiales variables, l'orientation sexuelle, le statut socio-économique, les liens du père avec la communauté culturelle et le territoire traditionnel. Pour les hommes autochtones incarcérés, la recherche orienterait l'élaboration de programmes pour les pères destinés à bâtir, entretenir ou rétablir des liens avec leurs enfants. La recherche ferait la lumière sur les effets médiateurs de l'engagement positif du père sur la santé et le développement de ses enfants au sein de diverses structures familiales, y compris les tendances générales observées : parents autochtones qui ne vivent pas avec leurs enfants, qui ne se sont jamais mariés,

Note

membres de la famille élargie très engagés et éducation autochtone par les pères seuls. La recherche aiderait à déterminer s'il existe une nouvelle génération de pères autochtones qui incarnent les valeurs traditionnelles de l'engagement paternel responsable et les moyens qu'ils emploient pour réussir leur cheminement vers une paternité positive.

1 Cet article s'inspire des résultats d'une étude effectuée par l'auteur dans le cadre de la Fathers Involvement Research Alliance (FIRA) et financée par le Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada, le programme Alliances de recherche universités-communautés (Fichier n° 833-2003-1002) et par le Ministry of Children and Family Development de la Colombie-Britannique, dans le cadre du Human Early Learning Partnership. Les points de vue exprimés dans cet article sont ceux de l'auteur et ne reflètent pas ceux des organismes de financement provinciaux ou fédéraux, du groupe FIRA dans son ensemble ni d'organismes autochtones.

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positifs entre père et enfant, comme en témoigne une recherche sur des pères non autochtones (Roopnarine, Brown, Snell-White et Riegraf, 1995). L'étude récemment terminée révèle que de nombreux pères autochtones disent n'avoir rien de positif à offrir à leurs enfants (Ball, sous presse); bon nombre d'entre eux souffraient souvent d'une estime de soi si faible qu'ils ne se jugeaient pas « dignes » d'entretenir une relation avec leur enfant.

Occasions d'agir positivement

Malgré les nombreux défis, l'étude a déterminé que beaucoup d'hommes autochtones sont devenus des pères engagés et attentifs, dont certains qui sont parents uniques d'enfants dont la mère est absente. Les pères positivement engagés ont décrit les récompenses de la paternité, mais aussi les défis personnels et les barrières sociales que doit franchir un jeune autochtone pour devenir un père engagé. Ces résultats proposent des moyens d'aider les jeunes hommes autochtones à contourner ou à surmonter ces défis (voir la figure 2).

Représentations médiatiques changeantes des pères autochtones. Les médias canadiens représentent souvent les jeunes hommes autochtones comme étant des marginaux qui ont des démêlés avec l'école et la loi en permanence. Ces images véhiculent des attentes sociales négatives pour les garçons autochtones lorsqu'ils commencent à concevoir leur avenir comme père. Pour inspirer ces jeunes à voir leur avenir de façon positive, comme adultes responsables, les médias doivent véhiculer des images d'hommes autochtones qui assument le rôle de pères positivement engagés, y compris ceux qui s'occupent seul de l'enfant durant la

Au-delà des politiques et programmes axés sur les mères.

Les analyses des politiques de santé ne véhiculent pas encore l'idée que la participation du père peut contribuer à améliorer la santé et le développement de tous les membres d'une famille (Ball et Moseelle, 2007). L'attention demeure presque exclusivement centrée sur les rôles et les besoins de la mère. Les cliniques de puériculture et les programmes de garderie d'enfants et de soutien familial donnent l'impression que la mère constitue le maillon essentiel de la santé et du développement de l'enfant, ce qui accroît chez les jeunes hommes le sentiment d'inutilité. De plus, de nombreux organismes privilégient l'enregistrement de l'identité de la mère à celle du père sur le carnet de l'enfant. Les pères qui attendent un enfant doivent disposer de plus de renseignements, et le personnel de la santé doit déployer plus d'efforts pour que le nom du père figure sur les carnets des enfants autochtones. Ce sera une première étape pour assurer l'identification d'un jeune père à la paternité et son engagement auprès de l'enfant.

Les pères positivement engagés ont décrit les récompenses de la paternité, mais aussi les défis personnels et les barrières sociales que doit franchir un jeune autochtone pour devenir un père engagé.

- Les programmes destinés aux jeunes et aux familles autochtones doivent être évalués quant à leur ouverture à la participation des pères et à leur pertinence pour les jeunes Autochtones qui s'approprient à devenir père ou apprennent la paternité. Les programmes doivent offrir :
- un personnel masculin et autochtone;

- des renseignements sur le rôle du père, outre celui de la mère, dans la protection infantile;
- des activités d'intérêt tant pour les hommes que pour les femmes; et
- des politiques exigeant l'impartialité envers le père comme la mère lors d'incidents critiques impliquant leur enfant (Ball et Roberge, 2007).

Encourager la guérison et un mode de vie sain.

Un thème récurrent ressort de cette étude : les hommes ont besoin de temps et d'aide pour « apprendre la paternité », pour accepter leur rôle et en assumer les responsabilités. Bon nombre de pères ont affirmé qu'il faut d'abord reconnaître ses problèmes personnels et les surmonter, particulièrement la toxicomanie, la maîtrise de la colère et autres difficultés de communication, ainsi que de faibles compétences en relations interpersonnelles. Par conséquent, les programmes doivent soutenir des modes de vie sains, se pencher sur les problèmes de santé mentale et d'accoutumance et aider les pères qui attendent un enfant et ceux qui viennent de devenir père à acquérir les compétences nécessaires

FIGURE 1 Corrélat de paternité perturbée affectant les jeunes Autochtones



FIGURE 2 Stratégies pour raviver l'engagement positif des jeunes pères autochtones



Les politiques prônant le placement des enfants dans des pensionnats indiens (Fournier et Crey, 1997; Miller, 1996) et, par la suite, dans des foyers d'adoption et des maisons d'accueil (Société de soutien à l'enfance et à la famille des Premières nations du Canada, 2005), ont ébranlé les relations traditionnelles entre parents et enfants pour des générations d'Autochtones.

Les répercussions dévastatrices de ces politiques se constatent péniblement chez les hommes autochtones aujourd'hui. Les séquelles comprennent l'abandon émotionnel, la perte d'identité culturelle et de fierté personnelle, la toxicomanie et des problèmes de santé physique et mentale (Mussell, 2005). Bon nombre d'hommes peinent à entretenir des relations intimes, à s'acquitter d'obligations familiales et à communiquer avec leurs enfants (Smolewski et Wesley-Esquimaux, 2003). Les résultats de recensements confirment qu'en tant que groupe, les hommes autochtones auto-identifiés

âgés de 15 à 65 ans affichaient des taux de chômage, pauvreté, mobilité, célibat, éducation secondaire non terminée, incarcération et itinérance plus élevés que les hommes non autochtones (Statistique Canada, 2001). Un homme sur cinq incarcéré au Canada est Autochtone (Statistique Canada, 2005). Le taux de mortalité chez les jeunes hommes autochtones est plus élevé que chez les autres Canadiens en raison du suicide ou de blessures involontaires (Santé Canada, 2005). Ces facteurs alimentent les difficultés des pères à communiquer avec les enfants et à s'occuper d'eux. Les générations subséquentes en subissent les contrecoups. Mauvaises conditions de vie, mobilité élevée, nombreux problèmes de santé et stigmate social exacerbent les difficultés de développer des liens

Presque tous ont raconté leurs expériences négatives liées à leur propre père – ou à son absence; ils n'ont donc pas pu s'inspirer d'exemples positifs pour être de bons pères à leur tour.

natalité élevé, mais le taux relatif-
ment faible d'enfants autochtones
vivant avec leur père; et les taux élevés
de toxicomanie, suicide, incarcération
et pauvreté chez les jeunes hommes.
S'inspirant de leur vécu et d'histoires
de leurs semblables, ils ont expliqué
en quoi grandir sans la présence
soutenue et positive d'un père
accroît les difficultés socio-historiques,
économiques et émotionnelles pour

Les pères ont expliqué qu'accepter
et apprendre la paternité représentait
un processus graduel qui, souvent,
s'amorçait des années après la nais-
sance de leur premier enfant. La
plupart étaient issus de familles com-
plexes d'enfants nés de différentes
relations. Bon nombre de pères ont
expliqué l'absence totale de soutien
des établissements formels, comme les
cliniques de soins de santé primaires

la prochaine génération de jeunes
hommes qui auront un enfant.

Les résultats en contexte : l'héritage des pensionnats indiens, la loi sur les Indiens

Le rôle joué par les lois et les poli-
tiques canadiennes dans l'exclusion
sociale des personnes et des groupes
autochtones a été souvent étudié
(Commission royale sur les peuples
autochtones, 1996; Salee, 2006). Le
rôle des pères autochtones au sein
de la famille a essuyé de grands revers
avec, pour conséquences, des effets
délétères sur la santé et le bien-être
de leurs enfants ainsi que la leur (voir
la figure 1). Les restrictions des activi-
tés de subsistance traditionnelles et les
déménagements forcés des territoires
ancestraux ont miné la capacité de
bien des hommes de s'acquitter de
leur rôle traditionnel : subvenir aux
besoins de la famille et transmettre
le savoir pour vivre des ressources du
territoire (Chrisjohn et Young, 1997).
L'interdiction de rites cérémoniaux
et sacrés a endigué la transmission
des connaissances culturelles et des
croyances spirituelles de père à enfant.

et les écoles – axes sur les mères. Signe
encourageant, le mouvement des
femmes autochtones se penche un
peu sur le rôle des hommes, ce qui
contribue à créer un environnement
propice au changement social chez
ces derniers. Les pères engagés auprès
de leurs enfants attribuaient souvent
leur réussite à la collaboration de leur
partenaire. Certains pères ont aussi
souligné le fait que des constructions
changeantes de l'identité masculine
dans certaines communautés autoch-
tones les auraient incités à assumer le
rôle d'aidant naturel auprès de leurs
enfants. Le désir de nombreux peuples
autochtones d'intégrer des enseigne-
ments traditionnels à leur vie contem-
poraine facilite l'attention accordée
aux rôles masculins, dont ceux liés
à l'éducation d'un enfant.
Certains pères ont réfléchi au proces-
sus de guérison comme force sociale
positive au sein de leur communauté
au Canada, favorisant une nouvelle
compréhension des rôles, responsa-
bilités et joies d'être parent et père.
D'autres ont exprimé de vives inquié-
tudes quant à l'avvenir de la paternité
autochtone, soulignant le taux de

enfant âgé de moins de sept ans.
Plus de la moitié (44) des volontaires
vivaient avec un partenaire. Près du
tiers possédaient un diplôme d'études
secondaires ou une formation postse-
condaire, soit un niveau d'éducation
supérieur à celui calculé par Statistique
Canada (2001) chez les hommes
autochtones âgés de 15 à 65 ans. Les
participants ont déterminé des façons
idéales de communiquer les connais-
sances acquises et d'en tirer profit :
autre des bulletins communautaires
et des articles de journaux, un docu-
mentaire vidéo et des brochures d'in-
formation ont fait la quasi-unanimité,
car ils leur permettent de raconter leur
histoire « dans leurs propres mots ».
Six pères des Premières nations ont
donc participé à la réalisation d'un
documentaire sur la paternité (Ball
et Asterisk Productions, 2007), et un
événement de ressources papier et élec-
troniques a été produit.
Les résultats de cette étude jettent un
éclairage sur les conditions associées
au colonialisme qui ont façonné les
défis des pères « face à la paternité »,
pour « apprendre à être père » et
« devenir un homme ». Presque tous
ont raconté leurs expériences négati-
ves liées à leur propre père – ou à
son absence; ils n'ont donc pas pu
s'inspirer d'exemples positifs pour être
de bons pères à leur tour. La plupart
ont signalé des problèmes de toxico-
manie, de détresse psychologique et
des difficultés à entretenir des rela-
tions de couple et familiales, les empê-
chant ainsi de s'occuper pleinement
de leurs enfants. Les pères positive-
ment engagés ont suivi une démarche
personnelle de guérison et de réconcili-
ation avec leur passé dans les
pensionnats indiens ou comme
survivants secondaires des effets de
ces pensionnats. Pour eux, la guérison
représentait la première étape de leur
cheminement vers la paternité.

Réformes en matière de politiques et pratiques pour favoriser une transition positive des jeunes hommes autochtones vers la paternité!

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Pour bien des enfants et des jeunes Autochtones canadiens, l'engagement positif d'un père dans leur famille n'est qu'une vague notion qui ne les concerne pas. Selon Statistique Canada (2001), plus de la moitié des enfants autochtones qui grandissent à l'extérieur des réserves ne sont élevés que par leur mère. Bon nombre d'entre eux n'ont aucun contact avec leur père, ce qui a des répercussions considérables. Toutefois, les témoignages de pères autochtones recueillis pour la première étude sur la paternité autochtone au Canada révèlent l'espoir d'une nouvelle génération potentielle de pères qui ont une contribution positive à leur famille. Cette génération mérite une reconnaissance et un soutien immédiats par l'entremise de réformes des programmes et politiques.

Pourquoi l'engagement du père importe-t-il?

La recherche a démontré l'importance de l'engagement positif du père auprès de ses enfants. Le comportement paternel influence celui des futurs pères sur plusieurs générations (Cowan et Cowan, 1987), mais il existe aussi d'importants corrélats entre le degré et la qualité de cet engagement et la santé (p. ex. Ball et Moselle, 2007; Russek et Schwartz, 1997), le développement (p. ex. Howard, Lefebvre, Borkowski et Whitman, 2006; Marsiglio, Day et Lamb, 2000) et la vulnérabilité au suicide de ces enfants (Brent, Perpet, Moritz et Liotus, 1995; Rubenstein, Halton, Kasten, Rubin et Stechler, 1998). L'engagement d'un père permet d'écarter ses enfants de la délinquance (Zimmerman, Salem et Notaro, 2000). L'absence du père d'un couple hétérosexuel (par opposition à l'homoparentalité planifiée) a été associée à des résultats sous-optimaux pour les enfants : risque de blessure accru,

Résultats : transmission perturbée de la paternité

Une étude récemment terminée a inauguré un nouveau champ de recherche au Canada : le cheminement des hommes autochtones vers la paternité (Ball, sous presse). Cette étude, qui s'inscrit dans un partenariat communautés-universités, est orientée par l'éthique de la recherche sur les peuples autochtones. L'équipe de recherche a rassemblé des pères issus des Premières nations, 73 pères des Premières nations et sept pères métis nous ont livré leurs témoignages sur la paternité. Des 80 pères, 36 vivaient dans une réserve, contre 44 hors réserve. Ils ont dénombré les enfants qui « leur » appartenaient – le nombre variant entre 1 et 11, avec une moyenne de trois – bien que certains n'étaient pas gardien de leurs enfants ou n'avaient pas vécu avec eux. Ils étaient tous père d'au moins un

asthme (Harknett, 2005), obésité (Strauss et Knight, 1999) et autres problèmes de santé (Horn et Sylvester, 2002), pathologie du langage et de la parole (Dawson, 1991), départ prématuré de l'école (Painter et Levine, 2000) et lien faible avec le marché du travail (McLanahan et Sandefur, 1994). Les jeunes pères privés d'une présence paternelle pendant leur enfance auront tendance à reproduire ce cycle (Furstenberg et Weiss, 2001). Aux États-Unis, le US Bureau of the Census (2003) rapporte que la pauvreté est cinq fois plus probable dans les foyers d'enfants privés de père. Selon Statistique Canada (2001), 35 p. 100 des enfants autochtones vivant dans des réserves et 50 p. 100 de ceux qui vivent dans des centres urbains habitent avec un seul parent – la mère généralement. En outre, les enfants autochtones sont grandement sur-représentés au sein des organismes de protection de la jeunesse.

d'être retirés de leur famille et d'être confiés à la garde des services sociaux. Compte tenu de la situation économique des mères adolescentes (Grindstaff, 1990), leurs enfants grandissent plus souvent dans des conditions de pauvreté que les enfants de mères plus âgées. En 2001, 80 % des jeunes mères Amérindiennes vivent dans une famille dont le revenu total est inférieur à 15 000 \$ par année, contre seulement 27 % pour les mères Amérindiennes âgées de 20 ans et plus (Statistique Canada, Recensement du Canada de 2001). La précarité économique n'est qu'un aspect du « mal-être » de ces enfants. Il est reconnu que les mères adolescentes sont souvent incapables d'offrir à leur enfant un environnement sain et propice à son développement physique, émotionnel, intellectuel et spirituel (Comité sénatorial permanent des peuples autochtones, 2003).

Il est si facile de juger

Du point de vue de la société non amérindienne, la tentation est grande d'interpréter le choix de jeunes Amérindiennes d'avoir un enfant comme un mauvais choix. Pour cette société à majorité urbaine, un tel jugement de valeur implique qu'il existe d'autres choix de vie, des voies nettement préférables. Ces autres choix de vie impliqueraient une séquence plus ou moins typique d'événements : 1. au minimum de compléter avec succès des études secondaires, préférablement des études post-secondaires; 2. de trouver un emploi stable et rémunérateur; 3. de quitter le foyer familial; et 4. le cas échéant, de fonder une famille.

Pour plusieurs jeunes Amérindiens et Amérindiennes vivant dans des communautés pratiquement retranchées du reste de la société canadienne, la réalité est que l'éducation, l'emploi

et le logement sont déficients, parfois carrément absents (Cooke et al., 2004; O'Sullivan et al., 2004). Ces autres choix de vie sont à peu près inexistant. Dès lors, peut-on raisonnablement parler de mauvais choix lorsque ces jeunes ont des enfants? Débatte de la problématique de la maternité précoce sans prendre en considération les conditions de vie dans les familles et les communautés amérindiennes est réducteur de même que révélateur d'une vision ethnocentrique du monde.

Du point de vue des Amérindiens, les enfants et la famille revêtent une importance tout particulière dans la culture traditionnelle amérindienne. La tentation est grande d'expliquer, voire de justifier la maternité précoce des jeunes Amérindiennes par la culture : les jeunes Amérindiennes ont des enfants tôt parce qu'ainsi va la culture amérindienne. Cependant, au vu et au su des conséquences de la maternité précoce, l'idée même d'une jeune mère ne pouvant offrir à son enfant un environnement sain et propice au développement physique, émotionnel, intellectuel et spirituel est en contradiction avec l'esprit de la culture amérindienne, qui place l'enfant au centre de la vie familiale et communautaire. Débatte de la pertinence de la maternité précoce du seul point de vue de l'angle culturel est également réducteur et témoigne d'un certain fatalisme.

Peu importe le prisme à travers lequel on juge ou justifie la maternité précoce, les conséquences négatives pour les enfants d'un grand nombre de familles des communautés amérindiennes sont irréfutables. Plus souvent qu'autrement, la maternité précoce nourrit et fortifie la dépendance, de génération en génération.

Réflexions finales

À une époque où la faible fécondité des familles canadiennes n'assure plus le remplacement des générations,

la fécondité élevée des familles amérindiennes constitue une véritable richesse. Par contre, ignorer la maternité précoce et ses conséquences intergénérationnelles ne met certainement pas en valeur cette richesse puisqu'elle contribue à perpétuer la dépendance des familles et communautés amérindiennes.

Soyons clair : c'est de la précocité de la maternité dans un environnement sain dont il est question, pas de la maternité en soi, ni de son niveau. La réflexion et les actions à venir ne doivent pas porter sur le nombre d'enfants qu'ont les familles amérindiennes, mais bien sur le moment de leur arrivée et sur les conditions d'accueil. Enfin, la fécondité des adolescentes des pays les plus développés, soit 29 enfants par 1 000 femmes n'est pas une « norme » immuable. Des sociétés, dont l'organisation serait différente et saine pour les familles, pourraient avoir plus d'enfants provenant de jeunes mères. Cependant, même dans d'excellentes conditions, il y a tout lieu de croire que, dans ces sociétés, les adolescentes afficheraient une fécondité bien inférieure à celle des jeunes Amérindiennes du Canada.

Notes

1 Pour plus de détails concernant la source de données et la méthodologie, voir N. Robitaille, A. Kouauqui et E. Guimond (2004). « La fécondité des Indiennes à 15-19 ans, de 1986 à 1997 » dans J.J. White, P. Maxim et D. Beavon (dir.), *Aboriginal Policy Research – Setting the Agenda for Change*, Thompson Educational Publishing Inc, Toronto.

- 2 <http://www.aect.org/kidscount/teen/overview/overview.htm>
- 3 <http://www.teenpregnancy.org/>
- 4 http://www.unfpa.org/itrnch/about/index.htm>
- 5 <http://www.aect.org/kidscount/teen/overview/overview.htm>

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des grossesses non désirées et la réduction des infections sexuellement transmissibles⁴. Pour le moment, au Canada, les efforts pour réduire la fécondité des jeunes Amérindiennes sont, au mieux, discrets.

Conséquences de la maternité précoce

De façon générale, la maternité précoce augmente la vulnérabilité d'une jeune Amérindienne déjà défavorisée au plan socio-économique du fait de son appartenance culturelle et de son genre. Il en résulterait un risque plus élevé d'échec scolaire, une employabilité réduite, une probabilité élevée de monoparentalité et une dépendance accrue aux suppléments de revenus. L'effet combiné de la maternité précoce et de l'appartenance culturelle est très évident au chapitre de la scolarisation. D'après le Recensement du Canada de 2001, les Amérindiennes âgées de 25 à 29 ans qui ont eu un enfant pendant leur adolescence sont deux fois plus nombreuses (20 %) que les autres mères amérindiennes (10 %) et les autres jeunes mères non autochtones (8 %) à ne pas avoir complété la 9^e année.

Dès leur naissance, l'avenir des enfants de jeunes mères amérindiennes âgées de moins de 20 ans est souvent compromis. Les statistiques américaines sur la maternité précoce indiquent que les mères adolescentes sont plus à risque de ne pas recevoir des soins prénatals adéquats (Comité sénatorial permanent des peuples autochtones, 2003)⁵. Il en résulte qu'à la naissance, la fréquence d'insuffisance pondérale (Santé Canada, 2005) et de syndrome d'alcoolisation fœtal (Eni *et al.*, 2007; Comité sénatorial permanent des peuples autochtones, 2003) est plus élevée chez les enfants de mères adolescentes. Les enfants de mères adolescentes sont également plus à risque de négligence et d'abus, d'où un risque plus élevé

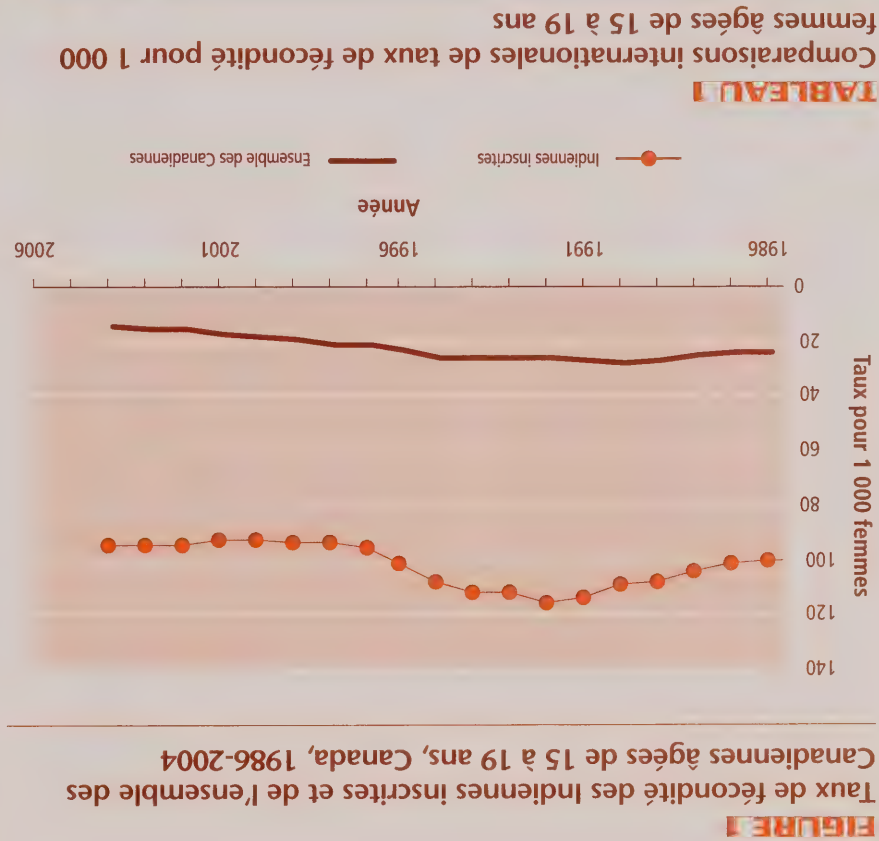


TABLEAU 1
Comparaisons internationales de taux de fécondité pour 1 000 femmes âgées de 15 à 19 ans

Région, Pays	Taux
Indienne inscrite	95
Canada	14
Afrique	122
Asie	53
Europe	24
Amérique latine	86
Amérique du Nord	50
Océanie	40
Pays les plus développés	29
Pays en développement	71
Pays les moins développés	136
Népal	127
Éthiopie	111
Territoire palestinien occupé	106
Inde	96
Somalie	75
Haïti	70
États-Unis	41

Quand les adolescentes ont des enfants Tendance et conséquences

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Avoir ou non un enfant est d'abord et avant tout un choix individuel. Cependant, lorsqu'une adolescente devient mère, les conséquences sont non seulement ressenties par la mère et son enfant, mais également par sa famille, sa communauté et, ultimement, la société entière.

Au Canada, la fécondité des Amérindiennes de tous âges, bien que demeurant près du double de celle des autres Canadiennes, est en baisse depuis les années 60. À l'échelle du pays, l'indice de fécondité des Amérindiennes a chuté de 6,1 à 2,7 enfants par femme. Cette baisse générale de la fécondité, rendue possible par la diffusion des moyens de contraception, est l'expression d'une volonté chez ces femmes de réduire leur descendance. Toutefois l'analyse des données sur les naissances contenues dans le Registre des Indiens indique une toute autre tendance pour les Amérindiennes à l'adolescence¹.

Fécondité des jeunes Amérindiennes depuis 1986

Contrairement à ce que les statistiques pour les Amérindiennes de tous âges indiquent, la fécondité des jeunes Amérindiennes âgées de moins de 20 ans est demeurée élevée depuis 1986, avoisinant les 100 naissances pour 1 000 femmes (Figure 1). L'analyse d'indicateurs globaux de la fécondité masque donc la situation particulière des adolescentes. Comparant la fécondité des jeunes Amérindiennes à celle des autres jeunes Canadiennes, on constate que la fécondité des premières est sept fois plus élevée que celle des secondes. Chez les jeunes Amérindiennes de moins de 15 ans, le taux serait jusqu'à 18 fois supérieur à celui de autres jeunes Canadiennes (Comité sénatorial permanent des peuples autochtones, 2003).

Le niveau de fécondité des jeunes Amérindiennes est le plus élevé dans les provinces des Prairies. Au Manitoba par exemple, une Amérindienne adolescente sur huit a eu un enfant en 2004 (128 naissances pour 1 000 femmes âgées de 15 à 19 ans).

Comparaisons

internationales

La véritable ampleur du phénomène de la maternité précoce chez les jeunes Amérindiennes au Canada se révèle lorsqu'on se livre au jeu des comparaisons internationales. La fécondité des jeunes Amérindiennes au Canada est deux fois plus élevée que celle des jeunes Américaines, lesquelles affichent la fécondité à l'adolescence la plus élevée des pays industrialisés². Aux États-Unis, le Congrès américain, le gouvernement fédéral, les États de même que des organismes privés, tel la *National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy*³, ont développé et mis en œuvre des stratégies de réduction de la fécondité chez les adolescentes. L'approche préconisée pour le développement et la mise en œuvre de ces stratégies repose sur une connaissance commune et documentée de la problématique de la maternité précoce (United States General Accounting Office, 1998).

D'après les statistiques démographiques internationales colligées par les Nations unies (Division de la population, 2006) (tableau 1), les jeunes Amérindiennes du Canada ont une fécondité d'un niveau comparable à celui des adolescentes des pays les moins développés comme le Népal, l'Éthiopie et la Somalie. Le Fonds des Nations unies pour la population (UNFPA) investit dans des programmes nationaux conçus pour répondre aux besoins des adolescents et des jeunes dans les domaines de la santé, de l'éducation et de l'économie. L'action de l'UNFPA vise la prévention

un représentant de la bande a remarqué que près de 10 % des enseignants étaient des Autochtones à la fin des années 1980, alors qu'en 2006, 90 % des enseignants certifiés sont Autochtones. Cependant, beaucoup pensent que le conseil scolaire est à court de postes pour les nouveaux enseignants diplômés (entrevien, février 2006). L'élaboration de parcours transparents et viables pour les jeunes doit donc comprendre une préparation scolaire adéquate à l'EPS, des possibilités de prospection des carrières, un soutien à l'EPS et enfin, un engagement à fournir du travail aux diplômés.

La vie et la culture

L'analyse précédente a permis de mettre en évidence certaines des contraintes institutionnelles que vivent les jeunes des Premières nations dans les domaines de l'éducation obligatoire, de l'enseignement postsecondaire, et de l'emploi. Si cette analyse permet d'expliquer pourquoi leurs parcours sont non linéaires, il est important de reconnaître que les jeunes qui ont participé à cet exercice n'accordent pas forcément la même priorité aux réorientations professionnelles que les responsables de l'élaboration des politiques. Ainsi, les participants accordent de l'importance à la famille et à une carrière satisfaisante et ont un sentiment de responsabilité marqué vis-à-vis de la collectivité. En outre, la culture et la spiritualité ont été et continuent d'être cruciales dans leur cheminement vers l'âge adulte. La majorité des jeunes assiste et prend part aux cérémonies traditionnelles et certains aspirent à assumer des rôles respectés dans leur société culturelle. Ils ont tendance à considérer leurs traditions culturelles et spirituelles comme fondamentales à leur épanouissement futur. Par conséquent, les réorientations professionnelles sont perçues comme faisant partie d'autres changements de vie plus vastes, et les étudiants ont manifesté le besoin d'équilibrer les objectifs professionnels avec les autres objectifs liés à la famille, la spiritualité, la culture et la collectivité. Encore une fois, vers la transition école-travail à peu de chance de tenir compte de ces aspects importants des parcours des jeunes. C'est un domaine où il faut faire plus de recherche et regarder où en sont ces jeunes plutôt que de présupposer un parcours prédéterminé.

Implications des résultats

Un étudiant nous a dit au cours d'un entretien : « J'avance par étapes ». Cet état d'esprit est typique des parcours graduels qui caractérisent les jeunes des Premières nations de notre étude. Bien que ces jeunes aspirent à l'EPS et aient terminé ou étaient en voie de terminer l'école secondaire, leurs parcours n'étaient pas linéaires. Notre analyse met en évidence certains facteurs institutionnels et personnels liés à l'éducation obligatoire, à l'EPS et au marché du travail qui permettent de mieux comprendre les « choix » de ces étudiants. En résumé, ils perçoivent les écoles des réserves comme limitées en ressources et en programmes, comptant d'avantage d'étudiants en difficultés que la moyenne et offrant des débouchés plus restreints vers les choix d'une carrière. Les élèves de ces écoles doivent assumer la perception selon laquelle la qualité de l'enseignement est moins bonne que dans les écoles provinciales. L'accès à l'EPS est limité, compte tenu de la rareté du financement fédéral réservé aux étudiants des Premières nations et de la disponibilité des programmes offerts dans les réserves. En outre, les coûts financiers et émotionnels du déménagement loin de chez eux, en laissant derrière eux leurs pairs, leur famille et leur culture, sont des défis supplémentaires pour ces jeunes. Enfin, les études supplémentaires ne garantissent pas un travail. Compte tenu de ces facteurs, les jeunes prennent les décisions sur leurs études en tenant compte des autres décisions sur le travail, la famille et la collectivité (cf. Looker et Dwyer, 1998).

Pour simplifier les parcours de carrière des jeunes des Premières nations, il faut s'assurer que les étudiants connaissent les exigences d'entrée à l'EPS et y satisfont, et que les institutions pédagogiques aident les étudiants à l'avance par étapes ». Cet état d'esprit est typique des parcours graduels qui caractérisent les jeunes des Premières nations de notre étude. Bien que ces jeunes aspirent à l'EPS et aient terminé ou étaient en voie de terminer l'école secondaire, leurs parcours n'étaient pas linéaires. Notre analyse met en évidence certains facteurs institutionnels et personnels liés à l'éducation obligatoire, à l'EPS et au marché du travail qui permettent de mieux comprendre les « choix » de ces étudiants.

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Note

1 Cette réserve, l'une des plus grandes du Canada, compte une population d'environ 10 000 personnes. Lorsque l'on compare cette région couverte par un traité à d'autres au Canada, on remarque que le niveau de scolarisation est légèrement plus élevé que la moyenne, alors que le taux d'emploi et le revenu y sont légèrement plus bas (Armstrong, 2001).

Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du PRP à <www.recherchehepolitique.gc.ca>

Perspectives d'emploi dans les réserves

Le concept de la transition entre l'éducation et le marché du travail présuppose que les jeunes connaissent leurs différentes options de carrière, qu'ils ont l'information nécessaire pour prendre des décisions et qu'ils auront accès à un emploi correspondant à leurs compétences. Or, dans la réserve qui fait l'objet de notre étude, le personnel du service de l'emploi et des compétences de l'administration locale indienne évalue le taux de chômage à 40 ou 50 % (entretien, février 2006). Cet ordre d'idée correspond aux chiffres parus dans *l'Enquête auprès des peuples autochtones* de 2001 (Statistique Canada, 2001). L'administration locale indienne, les ministères et agences (p. ex. santé, éducation), ainsi qu'un programme d'agriculture, étaient les principaux employeurs de la réserve. Le chômage chez les jeunes posait aussi problème. Par exemple, bien que le service de l'emploi et des compétences dispose d'un programme d'emploi d'été pour étudiants, environ un tiers des candidats seulement arrivaient à obtenir un poste. Comme le niveau d'éducation moyen des membres de la bande augmente, on doit se demander à quoi ces nouvelles compétences vont pouvoir servir. On essaie de ramener les professionnels dans la réserve pour le travail intellectuel, sont très limités. Ce problème est source de tensions dans la collectivité (cf. Gabour *et al.*, 1996). Par exemple, deux des principaux employeurs de la réserve de notre étude sont les services de la santé et de l'éducation. Chacun emploie environ 200 personnes, et le nombre de professionnels autochtones a augmenté au fil du temps. En effet,

et de se soumettre à une vérification du Conseil. Cependant, le statut actuel du CAPN est flou (Morgan *et Louie*, 2006) et les gouvernements provinciaux ne reconnaissent pas formellement ses accréditations. Par conséquent, les collèges tribaux sont dans une impasse car ils sont souvent créés en opposition aux institutions ordinaires mais doivent s'harmoniser avec celles-ci afin que les compétences de leurs étudiants soient reconnues en dehors de la réserve.

Au-delà des programmes offerts dans la réserve, il y a au moins trois collèges et deux universités dans un rayon de 300 km du centre de la réserve. La plupart des institutions fournissent de l'aide aux étudiants autochtones, ce qui est très important, selon les représentants de la bande. D'une certaine façon, les étudiants des Premières nations qui souhaitent faire des études postsecondaires sont comme les autres jeunes des milieux ruraux, dans la mesure où les coûts sont plus élevés pour eux et où ils sont plus susceptibles de se sentir exclus des programmes d'aide sociale (Looker *et Dwyer*, 1998). En outre, nos entretiens avec un petit groupe d'étudiants qui aspiraient à des études postsecondaires ont révélé qu'ils avaient également des responsabilités vis-à-vis de leurs jeunes frères et sœurs ou encore des personnes âgées de leur collectivité. Ainsi, pour ces étudiants, poursuivre leurs études a un « coût » financier et émotionnel considérable. Les étudiants des Premières nations continuent d'être minoritaires dans les institutions hors réserve et se sentent souvent isolés, malgré les efforts que déploient les institutions pour les aider (Smith, 1999). Les discussions mentionnées nous ont permis de comprendre pourquoi le parcours de beaucoup d'étudiants autochtones était plus long et non linéaire (cf. Breaker *et Kawaguchi*, 2002).

Il leur était souvent plus facile d'être admis aux programmes collégiaux et la transition leur était moins pénible. Ces observations reflètent le constat selon lequel les Amérindiens et d'autres groupes minoritaires aux États-Unis dépendent davantage des collèges communautaires pour poursuivre leur éducation (Richardson, 1990, cité dans Archibald *et al.*, 2002). L'accès aux options d'EPS dans les réserves constitue un autre élément important du cursus éducatif et professionnel des étudiants des Premières nations. Dans la réserve que nous avons étudiée, à la fin des années 1980, on a ouvert un collège, gère par la bande, dans un ancien pensionnat. Bien qu'il n'offrait au départ que des cours de rattrapage, il permet à présent l'accès à la plupart des cours en arts et sciences, en administration des exploitations pétrolières et gazières, en culture autochtone et en travail social, par le biais des collèges et universités locaux. Certains étudiants inscrits aux programmes du collège tribal ont dit craindre que leur diplôme ne soit pas reconnu en dehors de la réserve. Les institutions autochtones peuvent obtenir l'accréditation de leurs programmes en concluant des ententes d'affiliation avec des universités ou des collèges accrédités (pour un seul cours ou programmes, généralement) ou présenter une demande auprès des agences provinciales d'accréditation reconnues, même si c'est plus compliqué (Morgan *et Louie*, 2006). Comme l'a dit le président du collège tribal : « La seule façon d'être reconnu, c'est de fonctionner comme les institutions non-autochtones » (Barnsley, 2005). Sinon, les collèges peuvent faire une demande d'accréditation auprès du Conseil d'agrément des Premières nations (CAPN), ce qui implique de présenter un rapport d'auto-évaluation

élèves de niveau secondaire, fréquentent des écoles provinciales hors réserve. Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada finance ces écoles provinciales par le biais d'ententes sur les droits de scolarité.

Les participants à l'étude proposent plusieurs raisons pour expliquer pourquoi les enfants fréquentent les écoles en dehors des réserves. Certaines familles vivent plus près de ces écoles; d'autres ont du mal à trouver un logement dans la réserve. Les écoles des centres urbains, avec les commodités à portée de main, sont attractives pour les jeunes du secondaire. En outre, les élèves qui ont l'intention de poursuivre leurs études peuvent choisir une école hors réserve pour faciliter cette transition. Les écoles des réserves peuvent être perçues comme moins efficaces pour préparer les jeunes à l'EPS.

Dans une certaine mesure, cette perception finit par se concrétiser puisque le « choix » de ces familles de scolariser leurs enfants dans la réserve ou hors réserve a une incidence sur la répartition des élèves, ce qui, à son tour, influence les programmes d'enseignement. À titre d'exemple, si un nombre disproportionné d'élèves ayant des besoins particuliers fréquente l'école de la réserve (comme l'a avancé un représentant de district scolaire), le programme éducatif sera davantage orienté de façon à répondre aux besoins de ces élèves. En outre, le financement prévu pour ces étudiants serait moindre dans les écoles des réserves que dans les écoles provinciales, ce qui peut engendrer des difficultés supplémentaires. De plus, si les contrats des enseignants sont moins avantageux dans les écoles des réserves que dans les écoles provinciales (comme cela a été remarqué dans les entretiens), il peut être plus difficile pour les premières d'attirer et de garder les enseignants. Ces facteurs

empêchent de façon générale les écoles des réserves de garder leurs élèves, surtout ceux qui se destinent à un cursus universitaire (voir également Steinhauer, 2007).

Le personnel des écoles dans les réserves a également évoqué la difficulté de fournir aux élèves de l'expérience professionnelle et d'autres possibilités d'exploration de carrière, compte tenu de la taille des réserves, du manque de transport en commun, des possibilités de placement limitées et des contraintes d'horaires. Par exemple, il peut être difficile de trouver des superviseurs et des stages pour les élèves qui souhaiteraient exercer des métiers spécialisés dans la réserve, car les employeurs sont peu nombreux. Les placements hors réserve sont également difficiles à organiser, car les écoles des réserves sont en concurrence avec les écoles provinciales pour ces postes. Sur une grande réserve, le transport des élèves peut poser des problèmes. Par conséquent, il est plus dur pour un élève qui fréquente l'école de la réserve de savoir comment s'y prendre pour poursuivre ses études et trouver du travail. Ces observations reflètent le constat selon lequel les collectivités rurales du Canada ont plus de difficultés à mettre en place des stratégies efficaces de transition école-travail (Conseil canadien sur l'apprentissage, 2006), même si l'on peut avancer que les conditions de vie déplorables dans les collectivités des Premières nations exacerbent le problème (Armstrong, 2001; White et Maxim, 2007).

Éducation postsecondaire : accès et défis

soutien que les institutions offrent aux étudiants autochtones. Bien que théoriquement, au Canada, les Indiens inscrits soient admissibles au financement pour l'EPS, l'Assemblée des Premières nations évalue à 8 000 le nombre de requérants autochtones qui n'ont pas reçu de financement en 2000-2001 (Malatest et associés, 2004, p. 20). Dans la collectivité du Sud de l'Alberta que nous étudions, un représentant de la bande a remarqué qu'au cours des dernières années, cette dernière avait pu honorer moins de la moitié des demandes de financement. Ce sont les organismes des Premières nations et les organismes indiens qui versent ce financement aux étudiants, en fonction de leurs priorités et de leurs critères d'admissibilité. Cependant, en raison de l'augmentation des droits de scolarité et du nombre limité d'étudiants admissibles, le gouvernement fédéral a créé, en 1989, le Programme de soutien aux étudiants du niveau postsecondaire a du coup imposé des restrictions au financement des étudiants indiens et induits de niveau postsecondaire (Wotherspoon et Satzewich, 2000). Par conséquent, l'augmentation du rendement scolaire des Premières nations implique qu'il y a plus d'étudiants pour moins de ressources. Les politiques de financement, fondées sur l'hypothèse d'un cursus linéaire et direct, pénalisent les étudiants qui décrochent, changent d'institution ou de programme ou échouent leur année. Bien que les éducateurs encouragent les élèves à aller directement à l'université, la plupart des jeunes des Premières nations choisissent de suivre un programme collégial de deux ans qui sert de passerelle vers les programmes universitaires. Un peu plus de la moitié des étudiants subventionnés de la réserve sont allés

Les facteurs qui influencent les transitions scolaires et professionnelles des Premières nations

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Des chercheurs ont contesté l'idée selon laquelle les jeunes adultes suivent un parcours linéaire et séquentiel pour atteindre leurs objectifs d'éducation et de carrière (Dwyer et Wym, 2001; Looker et Dwyer, 1998; Raffé, 2003; te Riele, 2004). L'hypothèse des transitions linéaires notamment ne tiendrait pas compte de la complexité des parcours; l'importance accordée à la transition école-travail rémunérée néglige les transitions importantes que vivent les jeunes; enfin certains discours sur le sujet laisse entendre à tort que ces parcours sont accessibles à tous (Raffé, 2003). Certains chercheurs avancent que la théorie du parcours linéaire ne s'applique qu'à une minorité de jeunes (cf., Dwyer et Wym, 2001). Looker et Dwyer (1998), par exemple, ont présenté les résultats d'études longitudinales sur la jeunesse au Canada et en Australie, qui révèlent que la métaphore des « parcours linéaires » ne s'applique pas aux jeunes en milieu rural dont l'expérience est bien différente sur le plan qualitatif que pour les jeunes en milieu urbain.

Certaines études sur la jeunesse rurale décrivent également les expériences des jeunes des Premières nations. Cependant, il existe très peu de recherche empirique sur le processus de transition chez ces jeunes. Gabor *et al.* (1996) font figure d'exception. Ils avancent que le manque de logements, de moyens de transport et d'emplois limitent les options des jeunes Autochtones qui veulent rester dans les réserves. Nous nous penchons dans notre article sur les facteurs institutionnels et personnels qui jouent sur les parcours professionnels des jeunes de Premières nations de l'Alberta, au Canada. Nous étudions les questions pertinentes au système scolaire, de la garderie à la 12^e année, ainsi qu'à l'accès à l'éducation post-secondaire (EPS) et aux perspectives d'emplois pour les jeunes Autochtones d'une réserve du sud de l'Alberta.

Cette étude est née de l'évaluation d'un programme provincial d'emploi d'été qui vise à encourager les jeunes du secondaire à s'orienter vers des métiers dans le domaine de la santé. Entre 2004 et 2006, trente entretiens ou groupes de travail ont été réalisés, les entretiens ayant été entièrement transcrits. Nous avons utilisé le logiciel informatique NUDIST 6 pour coder les données et organiser notre analyse.

L'éducation secondaire dans les réserves et hors réserve

Au Canada, les provinces sont responsables de l'éducation, à l'exception de l'éducation des Premières nations, qui relève du gouvernement fédéral depuis la Confédération, bien qu'il puisse déléguer aux collectivités la responsabilité de l'éducation. De fait, de nombreuses collectivités des Premières nations ont pris des mesures afin de réaffirmer leurs droits inhérents de gérer et de contrôler leurs établissements scolaires. Ainsi, dans la réserve qui fait l'objet de notre étude¹, la bande est responsable de l'éducation depuis 1988, c'est-à-dire que le conseil scolaire de la bande peut embaucher les enseignants et gérer les écoles, selon les conditions de financement définies par le gouvernement fédéral.

Cela dit, en pratique sur le plan des compétences, il existe parfois des zones grises au sujet desquelles il est difficile de se prononcer. Ainsi, les gouvernements provinciaux peuvent adopter des lois en éducation qui touchent les élèves des Premières nations inscrits au système scolaire provincial, tandis que bon nombre des écoles dans les réserves suivent le programme d'enseignement provincial (Morgan, 2002).

Il est particulièrement intéressant de noter, pour les besoins de la présente analyse, le fait que de plus en plus d'enfants de familles vivant dans les réserves, soit, plus de la moitié des

aux prises avec des pénuries de main-d'œuvre. Ces effets positifs se feront surtout sentir en Saskatchewan, au Manitoba, dans le Nord canadien, en Alberta et dans les provinces de l'Atlantique.

Nous proposons trois stratégies pour augmenter la participation des Autochtones à l'économie canadienne :

1. **Renforcer le système scolaire aux niveaux primaire et secondaire**, afin de mieux préparer les jeunes autochtones à poursuivre leurs études ou à obtenir un emploi. Si le nombre d'Autochtones diplômés du secondaire ou poursuivant des études postsecondaires a augmenté, les taux de diplomation sont beaucoup plus faibles que la moyenne canadienne. De plus, les Autochtones qui terminent leurs études à un niveau ou un autre prennent plus de temps que les autres Canadiens pour y arriver. Nous devons dès aujourd'hui orienter nos efforts vers un renforcement de la qualité de l'instruction de base offerte aux étudiants autochtones afin qu'ils puissent franchir l'étape cruciale de l'obtention d'un diplôme secondaire.

décrit plus haut, les Autochtones adultes – et c'est une de leurs forces – poursuivent leur chemininement scolaire pendant de nombreuses années. Par ailleurs, les institutions d'enseignement postsecondaire et les différents programmes offerts sont maintenant plus accessibles aux adultes. Cela dit, il faut favoriser le développement de programmes de formation en emploi qui permettent d'intégrer plus facilement les jeunes Autochtones au sein du marché du travail.

3. **Cibler des secteurs, des régions et des populations bien précis.** De toute évidence, certains métiers ou certains secteurs, comme les métiers spécialisés du secteur de la construction, feront face à des pénuries et sont situés dans des régions où l'on retrouve une main-d'œuvre autochtone assez importante. Cependant, nous devons cerner avec plus d'exactitude les régions, les secteurs et les métiers qui auront besoin de main-d'œuvre de même que les caractéristiques des populations autochtones de ces régions. La grande diversité qui existe parmi les peuples autochtones doit être prise en considération dans l'élaboration de politiques et programmes. La détermination de ces secteurs, régions et populations permettra de s'assurer que les programmes de formation et d'enseignement destinés aux étudiants autochtones leur

Notes

- 1 Cet article s'inspire largement de l'étude intitulée « *Aboriginal Youth in the Canadian Labour Market* », rédigée par Jeremy Hull pour la Direction de la recherche stratégique et de l'analyse des Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada, juin 2006. Les données utilisées proviennent de Clatworthy 2006, Statistique Canada 2005, et du Recensement de 2001 de Statistique Canada.
 - 2 Sauf indication contraire, le terme « population autochtone » utilisé dans cet article désigne les personnes qui s'identifient comme Autochtones dans le Recensement.
 - 3 En raison de différences observées dans les méthodes de projection utilisées pour estimer la population autochtone (Clatworthy, 2006) et la population canadienne (Statistique Canada), les prévisions pour ces deux populations dans le Nord canadien sont difficilement comparables.
 - 4 D'autres facteurs, tels que l'âge, le sexe ou le lieu géographique sont importants (voir Hull 2004).
 - 5 Le nombre d'« Indiens inscrits » (ceux qui s'identifient comme des Indiens inscrits en vertu de la Loi sur les Indiens) présente moins de variations d'un recensement à l'autre que la population autochtone et constitue ainsi un indicateur plus fiable des différentes tendances.
- Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du PRP à www.recherchepolitique.gc.ca

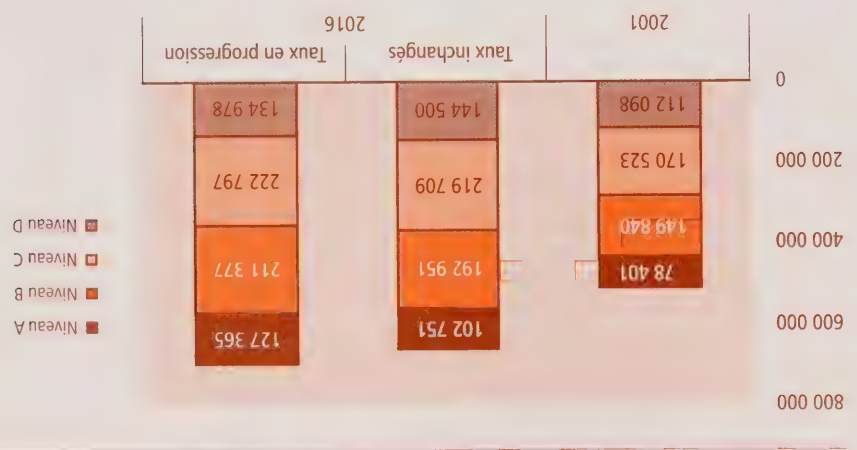
de personnes ayant obtenu une forme ou l'autre de certification augmente en fonction de l'âge (Hull, 2004).

Le niveau de scolarité a augmenté parmi la population autochtone. Les études démontrent uniformément une augmentation des niveaux de scolarité chez les Autochtones ainsi qu'une augmentation du nombre d'étudiants autochtones qui terminent leur secondaire et fréquentent des institutions postsecondaires comme le cégep ou l'université, surtout chez les Autochtones âgés de 25 ans et plus. Par exemple, entre 1991 et 2001, la proportion d'Indiens inscrits âgés de 25 à 44 ans et détenteurs d'un certificat d'études secondaires ou postsecondaires est passée de 52 % à 61 %.

Dans les années à venir, l'évolution du niveau d'instruction des Autochtones contribuera à déterminer la taille de leur population active. Deux scénarios sont possibles pour l'avenir : un niveau d'instruction inchangé ou un niveau d'instruction qui continue d'augmenter, comme il le fait depuis 10 ans. Selon le premier scénario, la population active autochtone passerait de 510 000 en 2001 à 650 000 en 2016, contre 690 000 en 2016 selon le second scénario. Autrement dit, la population active autochtone comptera 40 000 travailleurs de plus si le niveau d'instruction augmente dans la population autochtone que s'il reste inchangé (voir la figure 5).

L'augmentation du niveau d'instruction se traduira par un plus grand nombre d'Autochtones dans des métiers à compétence professionnelle élevée et une diminution du nombre d'Autochtones dans des métiers à compétence professionnelle peu élevée. Si le niveau d'instruction continue d'augmenter, nous devrions

FIGURES
Population active autochtone expérimentée prévue chez les 15 à 64 ans en 2016 au Canada : comparaison selon les scénarios de niveaux de certification



compter 25 000 Autochtones de plus dans des métiers de niveau A, 18 000 de plus dans les métiers de niveau B et 10 000 de moins dans ceux de niveau D d'ici 2016. Et puisque les pénuries de main-d'œuvre se feront surtout sentir dans les métiers à compétence professionnelle élevée, l'évolution du niveau d'instruction de la population autochtone contribuera à déterminer dans quelle mesure cette population pourra combler les besoins de main-d'œuvre.

Les conséquences de l'augmentation de la population active autochtone varieront d'une province et d'une région à l'autre. Selon le scénario d'une amélioration du niveau d'instruction, le nombre de participants à la population active autochtone devrait augmenter de plus de 7 000 en Ontario d'ici 2016, contre 5 000 à 6 500 dans chacune des quatre provinces de l'Ouest canadien, 3 000 dans le Nord, 2 700 au Québec et 2 000 dans la région de l'Atlantique.

Conclusions

En conclusion, on peut affirmer que la main-d'œuvre autochtone, actuellement sous-utilisée dans l'économie canadienne, pourrait devenir une ressource importante pour l'avenir. Au cours des prochaines années, des centaines de milliers de jeunes autochtones se joindront à la population active. Cependant, si leur niveau d'instruction demeure inchangé, plusieurs resteront sans emploi ou occuperont un emploi à faible qualification, ce qui aurait un impact négatif dans une économie où les besoins de main-d'œuvre les plus importants se situent dans des emplois à compétence professionnelle élevée. Par contre, si leur niveau d'instruction suit la progression observée au cours de la dernière décennie, le nombre d'Autochtones occupant un emploi à compétence professionnelle élevée augmentera et l'économie dans son ensemble bénéficiera d'une offre de main-d'œuvre qualifiée plus importante et d'une diminution des secteurs

des niveaux de scolarité plus faible, notamment pour ceux qui ne détient pas de diplôme d'études secondaires ou postsecondaires.

Le niveau de compétence professionnelle varie lui aussi fortement en fonction du niveau de scolarité. De façon générale, les métiers professionnels, techniques ou de la gestion (correspondant aux niveaux A et B à la figure 4) exigent un diplôme d'études secondaires de même qu'une formation postsecondaire, une formation d'apprentis ou une vaste expérience en emploi. Les métiers semi-professionnels ou manuels (niveaux C et D), quant à eux, requièrent au plus un diplôme d'études secondaires. Parmi la population autochtone qui ne détient aucun certificat, seulement 18 % ont occupé un emploi de niveau A ou B. Cette proportion passe à 31 % pour ceux qui détiennent un diplôme d'études secondaires, et 54 % pour ceux qui possèdent un certificat ou un diplôme d'études postsecondaires. Enfin, 43 % de ceux qui n'ont aucun certificat d'études n'ont jamais travaillé (voir la figure 4).

Les taux de certification sont relativement faibles chez les jeunes Autochtones. En 2001, seulement 40 % des jeunes Autochtones âgés de 15 à 29 ans détenaient un certificat de niveau secondaire ou supérieur, contre 65 % des autres jeunes Canadiens. Chez les 30 à 49 ans, l'écart entre les Autochtones et les autres Canadiens est plus faible. En effet, 59 % des Autochtones et 79 % des autres Canadiens de ce groupe d'âge détiennent un certificat quelconque. Ces statistiques concordent avec la tendance, chez les Canadiens, mais surtout chez les Autochtones, à poursuivre leur éducation tout au long de leur vie. Chez les Autochtones, le nombre

qui détiennent un diplôme universitaire, soit un niveau comparable à celui de la population canadienne. L'écart entre les taux d'emploi des Autochtones et celui des autres Canadiens se creuse considérablement à

FIGURE 3 Taux d'emploi des 15 à 64 ans au Canada en 2001, selon le certificat d'études obtenu et l'identité

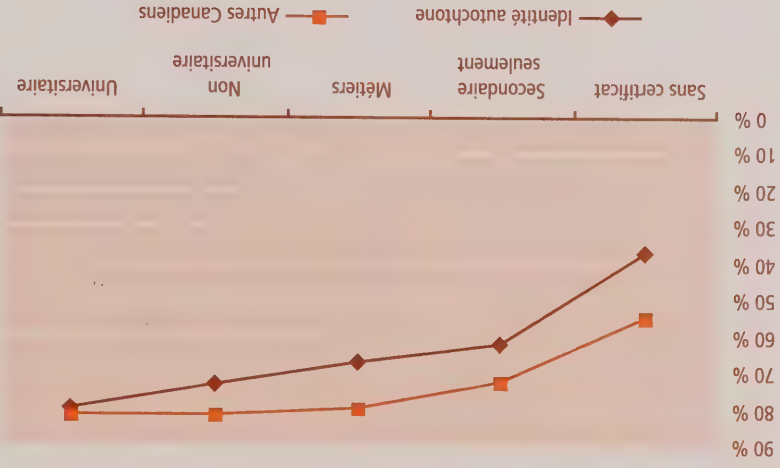


FIGURE 4 Niveaux professionnels dans la population autochtone âgée de 15 à 64 ans au Canada en 2001, selon le certificat d'études obtenu



favorise grandement la participation au marché du travail⁴. Comme le montre la figure 3, le taux d'emploi de la population autochtone augmente avec le taux de diplomation, atteignant même 80 % pour ceux

les baby-boomers, ayant entre 35 et 49 ans, représentaient le groupe d'âge le plus populeux, comparativement au groupe des 0 à 14 ans chez les Autochtones (voir la figure 1). D'ici 2021, la majorité des baby-boomers auront 55 ans ou plus alors que les 20 à 34 ans représenteront le segment le plus important de la population autochtone. En raison de sa structure d'âge et d'un taux de fécondité relativement élevé, on prévoit une augmentation de 48 % de la population autochtone âgée de 15 à 64 ans entre 2001 et 2026. En comparaison, la population canadienne en général ayant entre 15 et 64 ans atteindra un sommet en 2016 et demeurera stable par la suite.

La population des jeunes Autochtones continuera de croître, même après que le segment des jeunes Canadiens aura commencé à diminuer. Chez les Autochtones, le groupe des 15 à 29 ans devrait connaître une forte croissance entre 2001 et 2011 et une croissance plus modérée par la suite. Au total, cette population devrait augmenter de 37 % entre 2001 et 2026. Pendant la même période, à l'échelle du pays, le groupe des 15 à 29 ans devrait augmenter jusqu'en 2011, pour redescendre de sorte qu'il n'aura augmenté que de 6 % au total entre 2001 et 2026.

Au Canada, on estime que 25 000 jeunes Autochtones atteignent l'âge de 15 ans chaque année, un nombre qui devrait augmenter à partir de 2016. Entre 2001 et 2026, plus de 600 000 jeunes Autochtones atteindront l'âge de travailler et seront susceptibles d'apporter une contribution importante à l'économie canadienne. Toujours durant cette période, on estime que plus de 100 000 jeunes Autochtones atteindront l'âge de 15 ans dans chacune des cinq provinces suivantes : l'Ontario, le

FIGURE 2
Proportion prévue de la population autochtone âgée de 15 à 29 ans pour le Canada et les provinces des Prairies, 2006-2026



Nord-Ouest et le Nunavut, la majorité de la population est constituée d'Autochtones.

En Saskatchewan, au Manitoba et dans une moindre mesure en Alberta, la population des jeunes compte un nombre important et croissant d'Autochtones. Comme le démontre la figure 2, on estime que les Autochtones constitueront près de 36 % de la population active âgée de 15 à 29 ans en Saskatchewan. Au Manitoba, cette proportion devrait atteindre 28 %, contre 9 % en Alberta. Si la population autochtone est de taille comparable dans ces trois provinces, l'Alberta compte cependant une population totale beaucoup plus nombreuse. De plus, les taux d'immigration interprovinciaux entre ces trois provinces sont très différents.

Dans une grande mesure, une augmentation du niveau d'ins-truction réduit l'écart en matière d'emploi entre les Autochtones et la population canadienne en général. L'obtention de certificats, comme un diplôme d'études secondaires ou un certificat ou diplôme d'études postsecondaires,

Les jeunes Autochtones et le marché du travail canadien!

Jeremy Hull
Consultant
Prologica Research

À un cours des dernières années, les observateurs ont souligné l'hypothèse d'une crise au sein du marché du travail canadien. Caractérisée par une pénurie de la main-d'œuvre, cette crise est due à un faible taux de fécondité et au vieillissement de la population. Selon certaines études, l'économie du pays souffrira de ce ralentissement de la croissance de la main-d'œuvre.

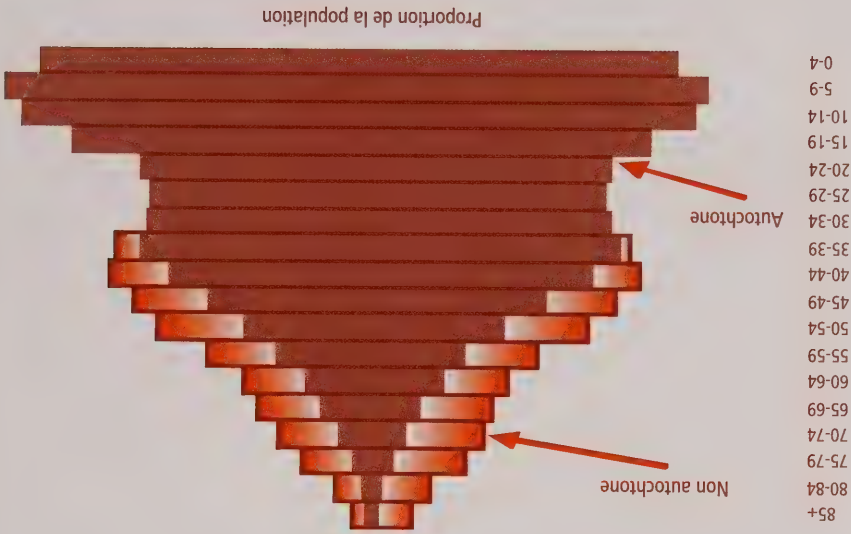
Pour répondre à ces défis, on suggère généralement de tenter de retenir les travailleurs âgés sur le marché du travail et d'attirer davantage d'immigrants. Jusqu'à présent, on a peu porté attention à la croissance rapide de la main-d'œuvre autochtone, qui pourrait s'avérer bénéfique tant pour les Autochtones que pour l'économie et permettre de répondre, dans une certaine mesure, aux pressions démographiques.

Les Autochtones, notamment les jeunes, présentent un taux de participation au marché du travail moins élevé que les autres Canadiens. Cette situation s'explique en partie, selon les études disponibles, par le niveau d'instruction des individus et leur lieu de résidence. Cet article, nous devons le préciser, dresse un portrait simplifié d'enjeux en réalité très complexes. La population autochtone, par exemple, est beaucoup plus diversifiée que ne le montre notre analyse. Ces précisions sont importantes dans le cadre d'une approche en matière de politiques publiques et nous reviendrons sur le besoin d'une analyse plus approfondie dans les conclusions.

La population autochtone? beaucoup plus jeune que le reste de la population canadienne.

En 2001, dans l'ensemble du pays,

FIGURE 1
Répartition des populations autochtone et non autochtone au Canada en 2001



L'investissement des ressources publiques et privées dans la réalisation du potentiel des jeunes des Premières nations, des jeunes Métis et des jeunes Inuits n'est pas un acte de générosité; il s'agit plutôt d'une démarche essentielle assurant au Canada un avenir prospère.

En ce sens, le coût lié à l'accès des jeunes des Premières nations, des jeunes Inuits et des jeunes Métis à de meilleures possibilités en matière d'éducation constitue un bel investissement à réaliser dans un avenir rapproché – et c'est un investissement qui sera très profitable aux générations futures.

En outre, il existe un autre avantage important : un tel investissement aidera à atténuer le risque d'une

pénurie de main-d'œuvre qui réduirait la productivité économique. Les gens des Premières nations, les Inuit et les Métis représenteront une proportion considérable de la main-d'œuvre du Canada, particulièrement si l'écart est comblé (voir l'article de Jeremy Hull dans le présent volume). D'ici 2017, les Autochtones représenteront une part croissante de l'augmentation naturelle annuelle de la population du Canada – un accroissement démographique marqué entièrement par les enfants et les jeunes.

Comblar l'écart constitue une tâche complexe que le gouvernement fédéral ne pourrait assumer seul : les gouvernements provinciaux et territoriaux, les collectivités et les organisations autochtones, les associations

professionnelles, le secteur privé, les syndicats et les employeurs doivent également s'engager fermement en ce sens. La Fondation est bien placée pour devenir un intervenant majeur en combinant toutes les ressources pour réussir. Ces mesures constituent une réussite en soi.

Pour obtenir plus de renseignements, consultez le site Internet de la Fondation, <www.naaf.ca>.

Source : Fred Cattroll, gracieusement fournie par la Fondation nationale des réalisations autochtones



Fondation nationale des réalisations autochtones Exemples de réussite

Roberta Jamieson
Présidente
Fondation nationale
des réalisations autochtones

La Fondation nationale des réalisations autochtones (FNRA) constitue la preuve irréfutable que nos jeunes possèdent de vastes ressources personnelles pour réussir s'ils disposent de fonds leur permettant de changer le cours de leur propre avenir et celui de leur collectivité en contribuant pleinement à la société canadienne.

La FNRA est un organisme de bienfaisance enregistré formé d'un conseil éminent et professionnel. Elle reçoit des fonds de sociétés donatrices, des Premières nations, d'organisations, de particuliers, ainsi que des gouvernements fédéral, provinciaux et territoriaux. La Fondation encourage l'excellence et offre aux jeunes Autochtones les outils leur permettant de bâtir un avenir meilleur. Elle les encourage à prendre leur destinée en main en leur donnant des conseils en matière de planification de carrière, en les orientant vers les différents secteurs d'activité et en leur offrant une aide financière pour la poursuite d'études postsecondaires, et ce, dans toutes les disciplines.

Créée en 1988, la Fondation est devenue le plus important organisme non gouvernemental de financement des études postsecondaires s'adressant aux jeunes des Premières nations, aux jeunes Inuits et aux jeunes Métis de l'ensemble du Canada. Cette année seulement, la Fondation a accordé des bourses d'études postsecondaires totalisant 3,2 millions de dollars à plus de 900 récipiendaires méritants Inuits, Métis et des Premières nations dans le cadre de son programme de bourses. Ces jeunes sont une preuve vivante de la réalisation des aspirations, des victoires et des accomplissements

personnels, du travail ardu, des obstacles franchis et de la poursuite d'un avenir prometteur. La Fondation a accordé déjà plus de bourses d'études aux jeunes des Premières nations, aux jeunes Inuits et aux jeunes Métis que tout autre organisme canadien à l'extérieur du gouvernement fédéral. Cependant, nous pouvons – et nous devons – faire plus! Il serait trompeur d'admirer les réussites de la Fondation sans chercher à connaître l'autre revers de la médaille. Beaucoup d'étudiants Inuits, Métis et des Premières nations ne se rendent pas au secondaire, et même s'ils commencent l'école secondaire, ils n'obtiennent pas leur diplôme du secondaire. Pour eux, pour le Canada, le potentiel de réussite se transforme alors en potentiel gaspillé, en occasion manquée, et en espoir déçu.

Une véritable réussite serait de réduire l'écart inacceptable qui existe actuellement entre le grand potentiel des jeunes Autochtones du Canada et le faible taux de réalisation. En effet, cet écart ne se refermera pas de lui-même. Si on ne le resserre pas maintenant, il s'accroîtra et sera transmis aux futures générations, créant ainsi un fardeau coûteux pour le Canada sur le plan financier, social et politique.

Selon les résultats d'une recherche publiée en novembre 2007 par le Centre d'étude des niveaux de vie, si l'écart entre l'éducation des enfants et des jeunes Inuits, Métis et des Premières nations comparativement à la population canadienne en général, 71 milliards de dollars s'ajouteraient au produit intérieur brut du Canada au cours des dix prochaines années.

En résumé, l'analyse par cohorte d'âge des données de recensement est une façon utile d'examiner les résultats scolaires de la population indienne inscrite en fonction de l'âge et d'évaluer la mesure selon laquelle les progrès récents au niveau de la littératie fonctionnelle mènent à une amélioration de la situation et à une réduction graduelle de l'écart entre les Indiens inscrits et les autres Canadiens sur le plan du bien-être. Cette approche nous révèle que l'écart entre les taux d'obtention de diplômes universitaires s'est sensiblement accru. Entre 1981 et 2001, les sept cohortes d'âge de la population des autres Canadiens ont connu une augmentation de la proportion de diplômés universitaires. Les progrès les plus importants sur la période de 20 années ont été réalisés par les deux cohortes les plus jeunes, bien que les deux cohortes suivantes, 25 à 29 ans et 30 à 34 ans, aient atteint des proportions semblables de diplômés universitaires (20 %) après 20 années. Malheureusement, les cohortes d'âge de la population indienne inscrite ont connu une progression modeste ou très légère de leurs proportions sur la même période. En ce qui concerne la différence entre hommes et femmes, les Indiens inscrits de sexe féminin ont enregistré de modestes gains dans la proportion de diplômés universitaires sur la période de 20 années, surtout parmi les cohortes plus jeunes de 15 à 19 ans et de 20 à 24 ans. Cependant, entre 1981 et 2001, ces proportions sont restées en net retrait par rapport aux autres Canadiennes.

Il est préoccupant de constater que les Indiens inscrits semblent accuser un retard croissant par rapport aux autres Canadiens appartenant à des groupes d'âge comparables en ce qui concerne les études postsecondaires. Il est bien établi que les études postsecondaires sont un prédicteur clé du revenu potentiel tout au long de la vie (Howe, 2002). La recherche indique aussi que les résultats scolaires sont en soi en forte corrélation avec la condition sociale et économique; ainsi, le succès scolaire est plus grand pour les enfants issus de familles ayant des niveaux supérieurs d'études et de revenu (Gorard *et al.*, 2001). Par ailleurs, on a constaté que des facteurs comme l'état de santé et les désordres affectifs et comportementaux sont en relation avec la condition sociale et économique : les adultes tout comme les enfants de niveau socio-économique inférieur ont une moins bonne santé et sont plus susceptibles de connaître des troubles affectifs et comportementaux que les familles de niveaux sociaux et économiques supérieurs (Brownell *et al.*, 2006). Bien que les Indiens inscrits aient réalisé un certain progrès dans leur condition sociale et économique au Canada depuis quelques années, ils restent loin derrière les autres Canadiens en termes de statut socioéconomique. Il en découle qu'ils peuvent être confrontés à des obstacles supplémentaires pour ce qui est d'améliorer leurs chances d'avenir. Étant donné les exigences universitaires nécessaires pour obtenir des emplois de débutant, les Indiens inscrits risquent de voir leur progrès actuel plafonner voire régresser encore par rapport aux autres Canadiens.

Notes

- 1 Les résultats présentés dans cet article sont extraits d'un rapport qui sera publié par la Direction de la recherche et de l'analyse, Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada.
- 2 Seule la population des Indiens inscrits se prête à cette analyse des cohortes puisqu'elle ne présente pas de données comparables sur les autres groupes autochtones (Indiens de l'Amérique du Nord, Inuits et Métis). De plus, certains de ces groupes autochtones sont fortement influencés par des facteurs de mobilité ethnique entraînant des augmentations dans le dénombrement de la population qui ne sont pas attribuables uniquement aux facteurs démographiques traditionnels (Guimond, 2003).
- 3 Aux fins de cette analyse, l'expression « autres Canadiens » englobe la grande majorité des citoyens qui ne sont pas autochtones et les Autochtones qui ne sont pas des Indiens inscrits (y compris les Métis, les Inuits et les Indiens non inscrits). Les « Indiens inscrits » sont les personnes qui, en vertu de la Loi sur les Indiens, ont le droit d'être inscrits comme Indiens et ainsi de se prévaloir des avantages et droits prévus par cette loi.

Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du PRR à www.recherchepolitique.gc.ca

Les figures 2 et 3 présentent l'évolution des sept cohortes d'âge au sein des populations des autres Canadiens et des Indiens inscrits sur la période de 20 ans. Les courbes de tendance des cohortes sont établies en reliant les points d'une cohorte particulière à partir du recensement de 1981 jusqu'au recensement de 2001, la cohorte vieillissant de cinq années à chaque période de recensement. On obtient ainsi pour chacune des sept cohortes une courbe de tendance composée de cinq années de recensement distinctes.

Pour la population des autres Canadiens, toutes les courbes des cohortes indiquent un progrès de cohorte en cohorte dans l'obtention de diplômes universitaires entre 1981 et 2001, en particulier parmi les cohortes plus jeunes. Après 20 années, les cohortes qui avaient 15 à 19 ans, 20 à 24 ans et 25 à 29 ans en 1981 ont les plus grandes proportions de diplômés universitaires en 2001. Les cohortes plus âgées affichent des courbes de tendance plus « plates » que les cohortes plus jeunes durant cette période, ce qui signifie que, conformément aux attentes, leur taux d'obtention d'un diplôme universitaire n'a augmenté que légèrement.

Pour la population indienne inscrite, les courbes des cohortes âgées de moins de 35 ans en 1981 indiquent seulement un léger progrès dans l'obtention de diplômes universitaires entre 1981 et 2001. Contrairement aux autres Canadiens, les cohortes qui avaient 25 à 29 ans et 30 à 34 ans en 1981 avaient les plus fortes proportions de diplômés universitaires en 2001.

De même pour la population des autres Canadiens de sexe féminin, toutes les cohortes sauf la plus âgée (45 à 49 ans) ont enregistré des gains dans la proportion de diplômés universitaires sur la période de 20 années. Cependant, les deux cohortes les plus jeunes, 15 à 19 ans et 20 à 24 ans, ont réalisé les gains les plus importants entre 1981 et 2001, augmentant respectivement de 0 à 21 % et de 7 à 18 %.

Pour les Indiens inscrits de sexe masculin, le progrès du taux d'obtention d'un diplôme universitaire a été modeste pour les sept cohortes d'âge sur la période de 20 années entre 1981 et 2001. De légers gains ont été enregistrés par les cohortes de 15 à 19 ans

Jusqu'à présent, aucune explication ne rend compte de cette diminution entre ces deux années de recensement. Il est possible qu'elle soit attribuable à des différences dans le taux de participation des réserves au recensement.

Pour la population indienne inscrite de sexe féminin, il y a eu pour toutes les cohortes d'âge un progrès dans la proportion de diplômés universitaires entre 1981 et 2001. Ce progrès, même s'il est modeste, est presque le double de celui constaté au cours de cette période parmi la population indienne inscrite de sexe masculin. Pendant cette période de 20 années, ce sont les trois cohortes les plus jeunes, soit 15 à 19 ans, 20 à 24 ans et 25 à 29 ans, qui ont dans l'ensemble connu les plus grands progrès. Mais comme pour les Indiens inscrits de sexe masculin, ce sont les cohortes des 25 à 29 ans et de 30 à 34 ans qui affichaient les plus grandes proportions de diplômés universitaires en 2001.

Pour que l'écart entre les Indiens inscrits et les autres Canadiens s'amenuise, il faudrait que les améliorations constatées parmi la population indienne inscrite soient supérieures à celles des autres Canadiens.

Même si cet article ne présente pas de graphiques à ce sujet, on peut aussi examiner les différences selon le sexe dans les progrès du taux d'obtention d'un diplôme universitaire des cohortes d'âge. Pour la population des autres Canadiens de sexe masculin, la cohorte d'âge qui a enregistré les gains les plus importants à ce chapitre au cours de la période de 20 années est celle des 15 à 19 ans.

et de 20 à 24 ans entre 1981 et 2001, soit respectivement de 0 à 4 % et de 1 à 3 %. Les cohortes d'âge de 25 à 29 ans et de 30 à 34 ans possédaient à la fin de cette période en 2001 les plus fortes proportions de diplômés universitaires. Il faut toutefois noter qu'entre les recensements de 1981 et de 1986, la proportion de diplômés universitaires a baissé pour toutes les cohortes sauf les deux plus jeunes.

Cet article présente les résultats d'une analyse par cohorte des données de recensement; il démontre la persistance de l'écart entre les Indiens inscrits² et les autres Canadiens³ sur le plan de l'obtention d'un diplôme universitaire. Il faut préciser que d'importants événements historiques ont touché la population indienne inscrite au fil du temps, comme l'adoption du projet de loi C-31 en 1985 et les données incomplètes de recensement au sein des réserves. Ces problèmes et leurs implications possibles seront examinés en profondeur dans un prochain rapport exhaustif sur le sujet. Le présent article s'appuie sur les données relativement plus haut niveau d'études au sein des populations des Indiens inscrits et des autres Canadiens pendant les périodes visées par les recensements de 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 et 2001.

Niveau d'études des Indiens inscrits et des autres Canadiens en 2001

Comme l'indique la figure 1, les Indiens inscrits sont beaucoup moins susceptibles que les autres Canadiens d'avoir obtenu un diplôme universitaire, et ce, peu importe l'âge. Il est intéressant de noter les deux populations ont la plus grande proportion de diplômés universitaires. Pour la population indienne inscrite, les cohortes plus âgées (30 ans et plus) semblent comporter une proportion légèrement plus élevée de diplômés universitaires que les cohortes plus jeunes; par contre chez les autres Canadiens, les cohortes plus jeunes ont les proportions plus élevées de diplômés universitaires, suivies des groupes des 40 à 44 ans et 45 à 49 ans. Parmi les groupes de 25 à 29 ans et 30 à 34 ans, la proportion des autres Canadiens possédant un diplôme

FIGURE 2 Proportion de la population des autres Canadiens détenteurs d'un diplôme universitaire, sept cohortes d'âge suivies de 1981 à 2001

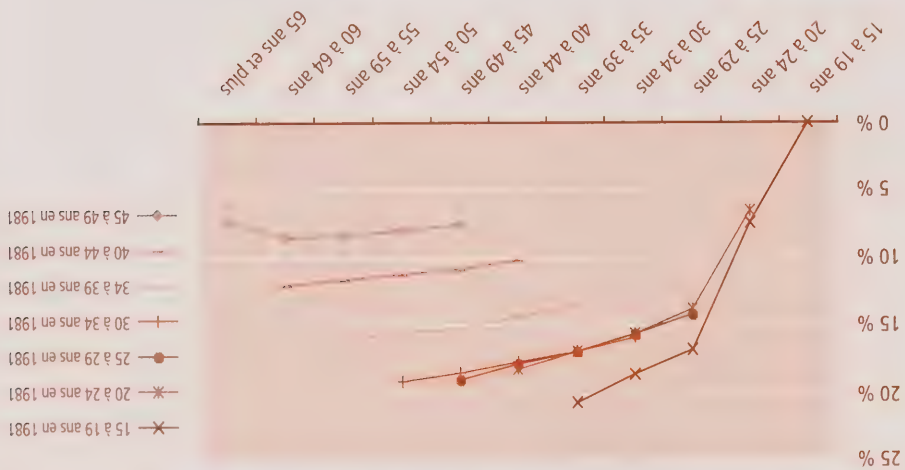
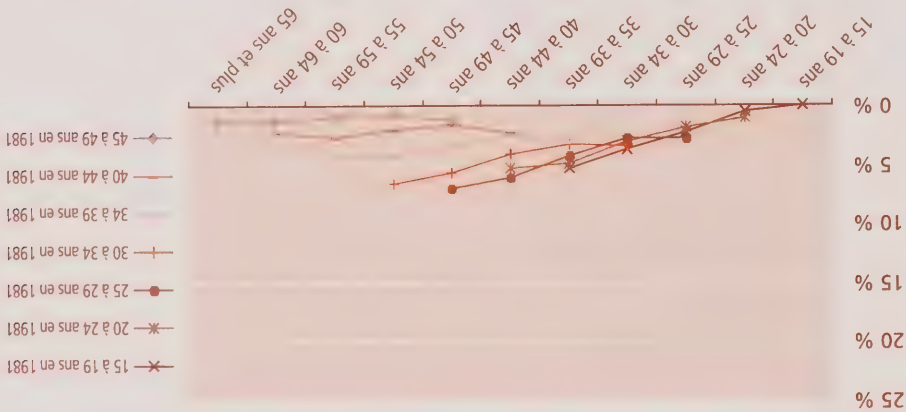


FIGURE 3 Proportion de la population des Indiens inscrits détenteurs d'un diplôme universitaire, sept cohortes d'âge suivies de 1981 à 2001



universitaire est cinq fois plus élevée que la proportion au sein de la population indienne inscrite.

Analyse par cohorte d'âge

En utilisant la méthode analytique fondée sur les cohortes d'âge, nous pouvons suivre l'évolution, de 1981 à 2001, de sept cohortes de 15 à 19 ans jusqu'à 45 à 49 ans. Il est ainsi possible de constater combien les résultats scolaires se sont améliorés. Intuitivement, chaque cohorte devrait afficher une certaine amélioration par rapport à la précédente. Cependant, pour que l'écart entre les Indiens inscrits et les autres Canadiens s'améliore, les améliorations constatées parmi la population indienne inscrite devraient être supérieures à celles des autres Canadiens.

Niveau d'études universitaires au sein de la population des Indiens inscrits, de 1981 à 2001

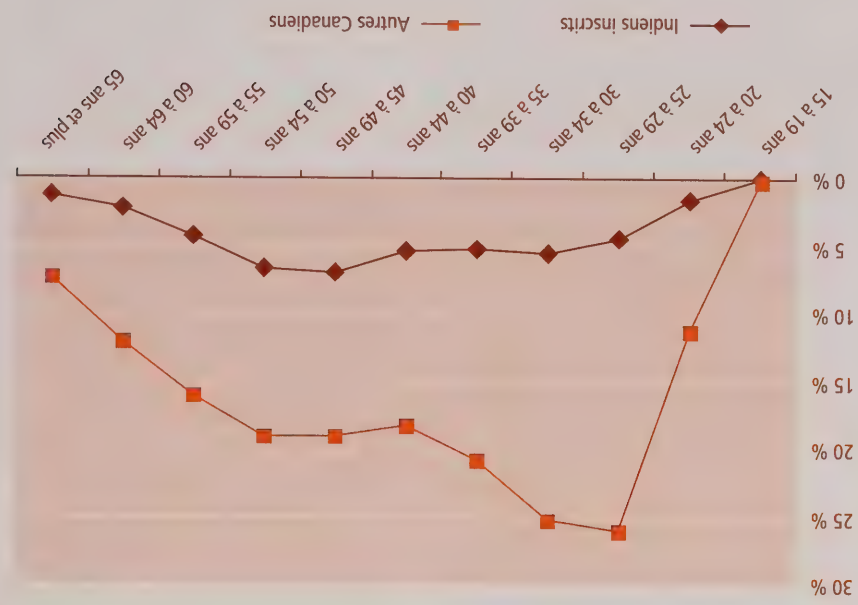
Analyse de cohortes

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Cependant, s'il y a lieu de se réjouir de ces progrès, ils ne révèlent pas tout. En l'occurrence, les progrès en matière d'études au sein de la population indienne inscrite n'ont pas suivi le rythme de ceux connus par les Canadiens non autochtones – surtout en ce qui concerne l'obtention de diplômes et certificats universitaires. Cette situation revêt une grande importance vu l'accent que mettent le Canada et les autres pays de l'OCDE sur l'éducation des enfants et des jeunes en vue de participer à l'économie mondiale axée sur le savoir et sans cesse plus concurrentielle et dynamique, et en récolter les fruits. De récentes statistiques indiquent de plus hauts taux d'inscription à l'université, conséquence des exigences académiques de plus en plus élevées pour les professions de la nouvelle économie mondiale (Statistique Canada, 2005).

L'écart entre Autochtones et non-Autochtones en ce qui concerne les résultats scolaires et sur le marché du travail a fait l'objet de recherches approfondies (Hull, 2005; Mendelsohn, 2006). Des travaux récents font toutefois état de progrès encourageants : des améliorations ont été constatées dans les taux d'obtention d'un diplôme d'études secondaires ou postsecondaires non universitaires (Maxim et White, 2005). Il a aussi été établi que les Autochtones qui obtiennent un diplôme universitaire ont autant de succès sur le marché du travail que leurs homologues non autochtones. Cette évolution est confirmée par l'amélioration de l'indice de développement humain pour les Indiens inscrits (Beavon *et al.*, 2004), dont le niveau de littératie fonctionnelle (9^e année) est une composante essentielle¹.

FIGURE 1
Proportion de la population des Indiens inscrits et des autres Canadiens détenant un diplôme universitaire en 2001



élèves avaient au terme de six ans un taux de diplomation presque identique (29,8 %) à celui des élèves qui ont changé d'école au sein du même district (28,2 %) ¹¹.

Un défi de politique à relever pour les systèmes d'écoles publiques

La reconnaissance du changement d'école comme un facteur en forte corrélation avec les résultats scolaires des élèves autochtones soulève d'importantes questions pour les responsables des politiques. Un changement d'école non lié à la structure scolaire peut être dû à un certain nombre de facteurs externes, qui ne sont pas bien compris en particulier chez les élèves autochtones. Il est donc nécessaire de mieux comprendre ce phénomène et d'élaborer et mettre en œuvre des politiques et des pratiques qui permettront de relever les défis engendrés par la forte mobilité des élèves autochtones.

Des recherches menées en Australie (Hotten *et al.*, 2004) et aux États-Unis (Rumberger *et al.*, 1999) examinent diverses interventions relatives à la mobilité des élèves. Elles peuvent fournir des leçons utiles en vue de favoriser le succès scolaire des Autochtones au Canada. Des programmes pour « nouveaux arrivants » ont été mis en place par certaines administrations pour mieux répondre aux besoins des élèves qui changent d'école. D'autres administrations tentent de retenir les élèves vivant des changements de lieu de résidence. D'autres programmes encourent encore privilègent plutôt des stratégies telles que le soutien par les pairs, le soutien scolaire, le perfectionnement du personnel et l'amélioration des communications et l'échange de dossiers entre administrations. Il existe d'autres formes d'intervention : l'aide au transport, les programmes cibles de prévention des risques et les programmes visant à renforcer l'intégration communautaire.

Alors que les observations rapportées ici proviennent d'une analyse quantitative à grande échelle, des travaux plus qualitatifs et ethnographiques sont nécessaires pour apporter une information plus raffinée sur le degré et la nature de la mobilité des élèves autochtones. Il faudrait aussi des recherches à l'échelle de l'école pour analyser la façon dont les pratiques actuelles répondent à la problématique de la mobilité et des taux de diplomation des élèves.

Enfin, il importe de faire preuve de prudence dans la poursuite des études sur le sujet. Sachant que la mobilité résidentielle est élevée chez les familles autochtones et qu'une mobilité élevée des élèves est fortement associée à des résultats scolaires inférieurs, ce serait une grave erreur de considérer que cette problématique relève des familles autochtones. Une meilleure compréhension du degré et de la nature de la mobilité des élèves autochtones doit pouvoir aider les éducateurs à travailler avec les élèves, les familles et les collectivités autochtones afin d'obtenir des taux de diplomation plus élevés et de meilleurs résultats scolaires sur le long terme.

Notes

- 1 Les écoles gérées par les bandes sont fréquentées par moins de 10 % des élèves autochtones de la maternelle à la 12^e année en Colombie-Britannique (voir Postl, 2005).
- 2 Cette information est publiée dans le site web du ministère de l'Éducation de la Colombie-Britannique. Voir <www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/perf2006.pdf>
- 3 Dans la présente étude, le terme « Autochtone » s'entend d'élèves qui se sont auto-identifiés comme étant d'ascendance autochtone sur le formulaire utilisé pour la cueillette de données annuelle du ministère de l'Éducation de la Colombie-Britannique (formulaire 1701). Ces élèves peuvent être des membres des Premières nations, des Indiens inscrits, des Indiens non inscrits, des Métis ou des Inuits. Les auteurs reconnaissent que la définition de ces termes est contestée. Les élèves se déclarent volontairement

- 4 Les variables socioéconomiques étaient les suivantes : niveau d'études inférieur à l'école secondaire, taux de chômage, proportion des familles gagnant moins de 20 000 \$ par année, revenu familial moyen et proportion d'origine ethnique autochtone. Ces variables peuvent ne pas traduire parfaitement les conditions associées précisément aux aires de recrutement des écoles, en particulier en ce qui concerne les groupes démographiques résidant dans le secteur, ou être exactes pendant toute la période étudiée; elles ont toutefois été considérées comme étant complètes et notables.
 - 5 L'indice de privation sociale était la seule mesure de la santé, de l'éducation et des conditions économiques à l'égard des populations autochtones des collectivités (de façon distincte des populations non autochtones des collectivités) disponible pour l'ensemble de la province.
 - 6 Lorsque le nombre de familles à faible revenu augmente de 10 % dans un quartier scolaire, les taux de diplomation diminuent de 0,05 %.
 - 7 Lorsqu'un changement d'école s'accompagne d'un changement de district scolaire, la probabilité prévue de la diplomation baisse de 16 %.
 - 8 Dans la présente étude, pour les élèves non autochtones, l'incidence des changements d'école secondaire entre districts scolaires ou à l'intérieur d'un même district était de 18 %.
 - 9 Dans la présente étude, la diplomation réfère au taux d'étudiants qui finissent leur programme en six ans. Lorsqu'ils entrent en 8^e année, les élèves ont six ans pour terminer l'école secondaire. Ceux qui terminent avant la fin des six ans sont comptés dans le taux de diplomation. Ceux qui terminent en plus de six ans ne sont pas comptés.
 - 10 Voir <www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/perf2006.pdf>.
 - 11 Il faut préciser qu'un changement d'école n'est pas nécessairement une conséquence d'un changement de résidence. L'ensemble de données ne permettrait pas d'analyser ce facteur.
- Le changement d'école peut être la conséquence d'un choix d'école de la part de l'élève, de la disponibilité de programmes, d'un changement de résidence ou d'autres considérations individuelles.

Nombre de changements d'école et taux de diplomation pour la cohorte d'Autochtones de 1998

Nombre de changements d'école (école secondaire seulement)	Pourcentage de la cohorte d'Autochtones de 1998 – %	Taux de diplomation après 6 ans (obtention du diplôme en juin 2004) – %
Aucun changement	31,8	56,4
1 changement	36,6	48,9
2 changements	19,8	28,1
3 changements	9,7	17,3
4 changements	2,6	11,3

Source : Aman (2006).

L'analyse et le modèle de la régression démontrent que les contextes de l'école et de la collectivité sont liés aux résultats scolaires à un certain degré. Par exemple, la diplomation des Autochtones est plus basse lorsqu'il y a des proportions plus élevées de familles à faible revenu dans le quartier de l'école⁶. Le fait de changer d'école est aussi ressorti comme un facteur important : lorsque les étudiants changent d'école, la probabilité qu'ils achèvent le programme scolaire baisse radicalement⁷.

taux de diplomation et types de changements scolaires pour la cohorte d'Autochtones de 1998

Types de changements scolaires (école secondaire seulement)	Pourcentage de la cohorte d'autochtones de 1998 – %	Taux de diplomation après 6 ans (obtention du diplôme en juin 2004) – %
Aucun changement	31,8	56,4
Changements liés à la structure scolaire	18,0	58,0
Changements à l'intérieur du district scolaire	19,5	28,2
Changements entre districts scolaires	30,4	29,8

Source : Aman (2006).

Changements d'école chez les élèves autochtones entre la maternelle et la 12^e année en Colombie- Britannique

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Les faibles taux de diplomation secondaire des élèves autochtones sont une cause de pré-occupations pour les parents et les collectivités autochtones ainsi que pour les éducateurs et les ministères provinciaux et territoriaux de l'éducation. Dans les écoles publiques de la Colombie-Britannique¹, les taux de diplomation des élèves autochtones sont loin d'être équivalents à ceux de leurs homologues non autochtones. Les plus récentes données provinciales sur la diplomation (2005-2006) indiquent que les Autochtones en sont à 47 %, contre 82 % pour les non-Autochtones². Le taux varie considérablement entre les collectivités de la Colombie-Britannique, voire dans les mêmes écoles secondaires d'une année à l'autre. Cette étude a examiné les facteurs contextuels de cette variabilité. La compréhension de ces facteurs aidera les éducateurs à atteindre des taux de diplomation des élèves autochtones uniformément élevés partout dans la province.

La mobilité des élèves autochtones

Notre recherche, qui fait partie d'une vaste analyse exploratoire à grande échelle, a été menée en utilisant un ensemble exceptionnellement étendu de données de recensement scolaire auprès des élèves âgés de 13 ans ou plus dans toutes les écoles publiques de la Colombie-Britannique (Aman, 2006). Ces données administratives auprès des étudiants ont été recueillies et générées anonymes, par le ministère de l'Éducation de la Colombie-Britannique. Elles donnent de l'information sur le niveau scolaire des élèves ainsi que sur les écoles fréquentées à chaque année scolaire. À un moment donné dans leur carrière scolaire, 8 % des élèves se sont identifiés comme « Autochtones »³ sur le formulaire de recensement des élèves recueilli chaque année par le ministère

de l'Éducation de la Colombie-Britannique. Pour la présente analyse, qui portait sur les élèves au niveau secondaire (8^e à 12^e année), ont été examinés les dossiers administratifs de presque 30 000 élèves autochtones, des années scolaires 1991-1992 à 1998-1999. La modélisation de la régression et la modélisation à plusieurs niveaux ont toutes deux été utilisées pour examiner les facteurs contextuels à l'échelle de l'école et à l'échelle de la collectivité pouvant avoir un lien avec les différences dans la diplomation des Autochtones. Les données du recensement de 2001 de Statistique Canada ont été utilisées pour obtenir les variables pertinentes au contexte socioéconomique de chacune des 296 écoles secondaires⁴. L'indice de privation sociale affectée conjointement aux collectivités par le ministère de la Santé de la Colombie-Britannique et le ministère de l'Éducation de la Colombie-Britannique en vue de distribuer un financement supplémentaire aux écoles a aussi été retenu comme variable d'intérêt⁵. Les différences entre cohortes, par exemple dans le nombre d'élèves inscrits à l'école et dans la composition démographique des populations étudiantes de chaque école secondaire, ont été identifiées. Initialement, les différences de cohortes entre les écoles ont été considérées relativement à l'école que les élèves fréquentaient à leur première année du secondaire (8^e année). Cependant, une analyse a aussi été menée sur la composition de la cohorte de chaque école et sur les résultats scolaires en fonction de l'école fréquentée à la cinquième année d'école secondaire (12^e année). Cette façon de faire voulait tenir compte du fait que le profil démographique des élèves dans une même école peut évoluer au fil des années alors qu'une cohorte passe d'une année à l'autre. Le nombre et la proportion d'élèves autochtones dans chaque école ainsi que le

- 3 Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada, non publié. Les estimations de mortalité indienne proviennent d'estimations effectuées par Statistique Canada à des fins de projections démographiques de la population indienne.
- 4 Statistique Canada. *Tables de mortalité, Canada, Provinces et Territoires, Ottawa, Division des statistiques sur la santé, catalogue 84-537-XIE.*
- 5 Statistique Canada. Recensements du Canada de 1981 et de 2001, totalisations spéciales.
- 6 Statistique Canada, Recensement du Canada de 2001, fichier de microdonnées à grande diffusion (FMGD). Les groupes ethniques sont définis d'après l'origine ethnique, réponses simples ou multiples.
- 7 Totalisations spéciales des données des recensements de 1981 et de 2001. Revenu du ménage moyen calculé par personne et non ajusté en fonction de la taille du ménage. Le revenu moyen est le total du revenu du ménage de toutes les personnes d'un groupe d'âge donné, divisé par le nombre de personnes dans ce groupe d'âge.
- Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du PRP à <www.recherchepolitique.gc.ca>

- à un jeune âge se répercutent sur la santé physique, les ressources économiques et sociales et le capital humain futurs. Les cohortes actuelles de jeunes Indiens inscrits se présentent à l'âge adulte avec moins de ces ressources que les autres Canadiens, laissant augurer que la diminution de l'écart de bien-être observé parmi l'ensemble de la population entre 1981 et 2001 pourrait cesser et même s'inverser à mesure que ces jeunes Indiens inscrits vieillissent, se joignent au marché du travail et fondent une famille. Ces observations confirment les conclusions des recherches antérieures à l'effet que les améliorations observées dans le passé puissent ne pas se poursuivre (O'Sullivan, 2006).
- Notes**
- 1 Des renvois ainsi qu'une description complète de la méthodologie sont disponibles dans un document plus exhaustif <www.aainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ta/pub4_f.html>.
- 2 L'IDH des jeunes Indiens inscrits se compose de trois indices : le revenu, le niveau d'instruction et l'espérance de vie. L'IDH des jeunes de 15 à 19 ans utilise un indicateur du niveau d'instruction légèrement différent de celui des jeunes de 20 ans et plus.

indiquent que la hausse du niveau d'instruction des jeunes Indiennes inscrites n'a pas beaucoup diminué l'écart entre leur revenu et celui des hommes.

Conclusions

Il est important de s'employer à suivre la situation des jeunes, non seulement dans la perspective d'améliorer leur situation actuelle, mais également parce qu'ils illustrent les possibilités futures des populations et des collectivités. Les tendances chez les jeunes en matière de santé, d'éducation et de revenu indiquent que, malgré certaines améliorations incontestables, les Indiens inscrits sont toujours devancés par les autres Canadiens. Autrement dit, les jeunes Indiens d'aujourd'hui vont beaucoup mieux que leurs parents au même âge mais ils demeurent au bas de l'échelle du bien-être comparativement aux autres jeunes Canadiens.

L'échec collectif des programmes et des politiques fédéraux, provinciaux et autochtones visant à amenuiser l'écart entre le bien-être des Indiens inscrits et celui des autres jeunes Canadiens a des incidences sur l'avenir. Les circonstances vécues

TABLEAU 4

Proportion de jeunes adultes âgés de 20 à 29 ans ayant un diplôme d'études secondaires ou plus, groupes autochtones et certains groupes ethniques, 2001⁶

Juifs	95,0 %
Chinois	92,2 %
Philippins	92,1 %
Balkaniques	92,0 %
Grecs	91,5 %
Libanais	89,9 %
Italiens	89,8 %
Polonais	88,6 %
Néerlandais	88,0 %
Espagnols	87,8 %
Hongrois	86,4 %
Ukrainiens	86,3 %
Africains	85,7 %
Antillais	85,3 %
Asiatiques du sud	84,8 %
Allemands	84,4 %
Sud-Américains, Centraméricains, Latino-Américains	83,2 %
Portugais	80,6 %
Vietnamiens	79,3 %
Métis	70,4 %
Indiens non inscrits	63,5 %
Indiens inscrits	57,1 %
Inuits	54,2 %

des jeunes. Intuitivement, on croirait que le bien-être augmente en vieillissant. C'est le cas pour les jeunes Indiennes inscrites mais non pour les hommes. En 2001, l'IDH des femmes passe de 0,740 chez les 15 à 19 ans à 0,777 chez les 25 à 29 ans, tandis que chez les hommes les valeurs demeurent pratiquement constantes. Chez les jeunes femmes, le risque de mortalité diminue considérablement entre l'adolescence et la vingtaine et la

TABLEAU 5

Revenu moyen du ménage⁷ des Indiens inscrits et des autres Canadiens âgés de 15 à 29 ans, 1980 et 2000, dollars constants de 2000

1980			2000		
15 à 29 ans			15 à 29 ans		
Indiens inscrits	41 012 \$	43 391 \$	Indiens inscrits	41 042 \$	71 185 \$
Autres Canadiens	68 247 \$	78 008 \$	Autres Canadiens	38 347 \$	62 460 \$
Écart			Écart		
20 à 24 ans			20 à 24 ans		
Indiens inscrits	39 010 \$	39 679 \$	Indiens inscrits	30 113 \$	30 143 \$
Autres Canadiens	57 281 \$	64 882 \$	Autres Canadiens	24 113 \$	71 185 \$
Écart			Écart		
25 à 29 ans			25 à 29 ans		
Indiens inscrits	18 271 \$	25 203 \$	Indiens inscrits	18 271 \$	25 203 \$
Autres Canadiens	57 281 \$	64 882 \$	Autres Canadiens	18 271 \$	25 203 \$
Écart			Écart		

TABLEAU 6

Indice de développement humain (IDH) des jeunes Indiens inscrits âgés de 15 à 29 ans, par sexe et par groupe d'âge, 1981 et 2001

1981			2001		
15 à 19 ans			15 à 19 ans		
Hommes	0,599	0,706	Hommes	0,599	0,706
Femmes	0,675	0,740	Femmes	0,675	0,740
Écart			Écart		
20 à 24 ans			20 à 24 ans		
Hommes	0,574	0,694	Hommes	0,574	0,694
Femmes	0,654	0,750	Femmes	0,654	0,750
Écart			Écart		
25 à 29 ans			25 à 29 ans		
Hommes	0,604	0,701	Hommes	0,604	0,701
Femmes	0,652	0,777	Femmes	0,652	0,777
Écart			Écart		

proportion ayant un niveau de scolarité élevé augmente. L'absence de telles améliorations chez les hommes semble indiquer que les jeunes Indiens inscrits sont « laissés pour compte ».

Par contre, des recherches antérieures

TABLEAU 3
Niveau de scolarité atteint des Indiens inscrits et des autres Canadiens âgés de 15 à 29 ans, 1981 et 2001

Nouvième année de scolarité ou plus			
15 à 29 ans		Indiens inscrits	Autres Canadiens
90,3	75,3	97,7	7,4
Écart			
Diplôme d'études secondaires ou plus		Indiens inscrits	Autres Canadiens
20 à 24 ans	34,5	69,5	50,5
Écart			
25 à 29 ans	42,8	72,5	33,9
Indiens inscrits			
Autres Canadiens			
Écart			
2001		1981	

Estimée à partir de la proportion détenant une neuvième année de scolarité (tableau 3), la littératie fonctionnelle des jeunes Indiens inscrits a connu une évolution remarquable entre 1981 et 2001. Malgré cette évolution des compétences de base en lecture et en écriture, l'écart avec les autres jeunes Canadiens en matière d'éducation de niveau secondaire ou supérieur a peu diminué. Par ailleurs, on note également un écart grandissant entre les Indiens âgés de 20 à 24 ans et ceux de 25 à 29 ans, indiquant une proportion plus importante à une acquisition tardive de ce niveau de scolarité.

En 2001, les jeunes Indiens inscrits comptent parmi les groupes ethno-culturels les moins instruits au Canada (tableau 4). Bien que l'augmentation du niveau absolu de scolarité soit encourageante, la faible performance des Indiens inscrits comparativement aux autres Canadiens

est préoccupante. Sur un marché du travail hautement concurrentiel, le niveau de scolarité faible et tardif des jeunes Indiens inscrits laisse augurer qu'en vieillissant, ces cohortes continueront de traîner derrière les autres Canadiens sur les plans de l'emploi et du revenu et seront plus susceptibles d'avoir un revenu faible et d'être dépendants de suppléments de revenu.

Niveau de vie

Considérant que l'IDH des Indiens inscrits utilise le revenu moyen par habitant comme mesure du bien-être matériel, pour les groupes plus jeunes, nous utilisons le revenu total moyen du ménage comme mesure des ressources économiques disponibles. Comme l'indique le tableau 5, le revenu moyen des ménages chez les jeunes Indiens inscrits a augmenté

entre 1980 et 2000, confirmant l'augmentation du bien-être matériel des jeunes. Cependant, ces augmentations n'ont pas suivi celles des autres ménages canadiens. Par conséquent, l'écart entre la situation matérielle des Indiens inscrits et celle des autres jeunes Canadiens s'est accru. Ces disparités sont accentuées par le fait que les ménages des Premières nations comptent plus de membres que les autres ménages canadiens. On observe des tendances similaires chez les jeunes des réserves et ceux vivant hors-réserve, chaque groupe comptant environ la moitié de la population des jeunes Indiens inscrits.

Différences entre les sexes

La recherche sur l'IDH des Indiens inscrits a démontré que les différences entre les sexes se sont accentuées, notamment en ce qui concerne le savoir. Le niveau de scolarité des Indiennes inscrites est de plus en plus élevé, quoique leur revenu moyen n'ait pas encore atteint celui des hommes (Cooke *et al.*, 2006). Dans chaque groupe d'âge, les valeurs de l'IDH des jeunes Indiennes inscrites sont plus élevées que celles des hommes (tableau 6) mais l'écart entre les sexes a diminué parmi les groupes plus jeunes, et ce, pour deux raisons. D'abord, le taux de mortalité a diminué plus rapidement chez les hommes entre 1981 et 2001 (tableau 2). Ensuite, l'avantage des Indiennes inscrites en ce qui concerne le niveau de scolarité a augmenté, notamment des études secondaires ou post-secondaires, comparativement à 57 pour cent des hommes du même groupe d'âge.

Comme l'indique le tableau 6, l'augmentation du bien-être selon l'âge donne un aperçu du bien-être futur

TABLEAU 1 Indice de développement humain (IDH) des Indiens inscrits et des autres Canadiens âgés de 15 à 29 ans, 1981 et 2001²

1981		2001	
15 à 19 ans			
Indiens inscrits	0,611	Autres Canadiens	0,713
Écart de l'IDH		0,905	0,192
20 à 24 ans			
Indiens inscrits	0,612	Autres Canadiens	0,712
Écart de l'IDH		0,901	0,189
Age 25-29			
Indiens inscrits	0,623	Autres Canadiens	0,737
Écart de l'IDH		0,919	0,182

TABLEAU 2 Taux de mortalité de 15 à 30 ans (pour 1000) des Indiens inscrits³ et des autres Canadiens⁴, 1981 et 2001

1981				2001			
Hommes				Femmes			
Indiens inscrits		75,7	38,5	Autres Canadiens		10,6	27,9
Écart		19,8	55,9				
Indiennes inscrites		34,2	20,6	Autres Canadiennes		4,4	16,2
Écart		27,5					

faible niveau de scolarité des adultes et des aînés (c.-à-d., la population de 30 ans et plus). L'éducation formelle étant principalement acquise à l'adolescence et au début de l'âge adulte (c.-à-d., avant l'âge de 30 ans), l'examen du niveau de scolarité des jeunes nous donne un meilleur aperçu des tendances actuelles en matière d'éducation.

est comparable à celui observé pour l'ensemble du Canada au début des années 1940 (Bureau fédéral de la statistique, 1947). L'écart persistant entre la population indienne inscrite et les autres Canadiens en ce qui concerne l'éducation formelle est dû en grande partie au

Le savoir

Le tableau 2 présente l'évolution du taux de mortalité chez les Indiens inscrits et les autres Canadiens de 15 à 30 ans. La mortalité chez les jeunes Indiens et Indiennes a sensiblement diminué entre 1981 et 2001. Malgré cela, l'écart entre les jeunes Indiens inscrits et les autres jeunes Canadiens demeure important. Le taux de mortalité actuel chez les jeunes Indiens

La santé

chez les jeunes Indiens inscrits. Le tableau 1 présente les valeurs globales de l'IDH des jeunes, qui représentent la moyenne des résultats combinés des indices de mortalité, de niveau d'instruction et de revenu. Les valeurs des trois groupes d'âge ont augmenté entre 1981 et 2001, comblant l'écart entre les Indiens inscrits et les autres jeunes Canadiens. L'IDH est utile pour mesurer le bien-être général. Cependant, ces valeurs globales peuvent dissimuler des variations importantes des dimensions individuelles du bien-être, à savoir la santé, le savoir et le niveau de vie. Dans le cas des jeunes Indiens inscrits, l'examen de ces dimensions révèle un portrait moins optimiste quant à l'amélioration de la situation des jeunes Indiens inscrits par rapport aux autres Canadiens.

Le bien-être actuel des jeunes Indiens inscrits Sources de préoccupations quant à l'avenir?

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Un des rôles fondamentaux de la recherche sur les politiques consiste à étudier l'évolution

passée afin d'éclairer les approches politiques actuelles et futures. Des instruments de mesure raisonnablement fiables sont nécessaires pour brosser un tableau du passé récent et offrir un aperçu de l'avenir. À cette fin, la Direction de la recherche et de l'analyse d'Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada a élaboré une série

d'indices du bien-être des populations et des collectivités d'après l'indice de développement humain des Nations unies (Cooke *et al.*, 2004). L'objectif était de produire un ensemble de mesures fiables du bien-être physique et matériel des peuples autochtones pouvant servir à en suivre l'évolution et à guider l'élaboration de programmes et de politiques des gouvernements et des institutions fédéraux, provinciaux et autochtones.

À ce jour, les tendances révélées par l'indice de développement humain (IDH) des Indiens inscrits et l'indice du bien-être (IBC) des collectivités des Premières nations sont encouragées mais suscitent également certaines questions. En effet, le bien-être général des Premières nations s'est considérablement amélioré entre 1981 et 2001 et les écarts d'espérance de vie et de littératie fonctionnelle avec les autres Canadiens ont beaucoup diminué. Cependant, il existe toujours des écarts notables de l'IBC et, à moins de changements majeurs, il faudra des décennies, sinon des générations, pour atteindre l'équité entre les Premières nations et les autres Canadiens (O'Sullivan, 2006). Par ailleurs, des améliorations sur les plans de la santé et de l'éducation chez les femmes des Premières nations ont accentué des écarts déjà prononcés entre les sexes (Cooke *et al.*, 2006).

inscrits

L'IDH des jeunes Indiens

Pour comprendre l'évolution de la situation des jeunes, nous avons adapté la méthodologie de l'IDH des Indiens inscrits afin de créer un indice du bien-être par âge et l'avons utilisé pour comparer les cohortes d'Indiens inscrits et les autres Canadiens âgés de 15 à 29 ans pour les années de recensement 1981 et 2001. Cet IDH par âge comporte trois dimensions importantes du bien-être : 1) une longue vie en santé, 2) le savoir et 3) un niveau de vie convenable¹.

Une des grandes questions que sous-tend cette recherche est de savoir comment la situation des jeunes a évolué aux cours des dernières décennies. Des transitions sociales et économiques positives chez les jeunes, notamment entre la fin des études et le début d'une carrière, le développement de relations et la formation d'une famille sont essentiels en matière de capital humain, social et économique. Parallèlement, les risques sociaux et pour la santé sont plus élevés à cet âge : les expériences vécues à la fin de l'adolescence contribuent largement aux disparités observées entre les Autochtones américains et les autres sur les plans de la santé mentale et physique et des résultats sociaux (Harris *et al.*, 2006). De surcroît, les expériences et les caractéristiques des jeunes offrent un aperçu de l'avenir. L'examen de la situation des jeunes et de l'évolution de leurs expériences nous permet d'évaluer si les améliorations observées pour l'ensemble de la population au cours des dernières décennies sont susceptibles de se poursuivre.

L'amélioration générale du bien-être de la population indienne inscrite se traduit par une amélioration similaire

1 Cet article s'inspire de publications, ateliers, colloques et recherches visant à mieux cerner les réalités et les défis pour les jeunes Autochtones (voir notamment Jérôme 2005a et b).

2 <<http://www.avenir-future.com/>>

3 <<http://www.nunatsiavut.com/en/youth.php>>

4 <<http://www.sapuitit.ca/index.htm>>

5 Propos tirés du site Internet du

Haut commissariat des Nations

unies aux droits de l'Homme,

<<http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/0/1ED6734E6490E4E7C1256D250027C28B?opendocument>>

6 Disponible à l'adresse :

<<http://www.jeunes.gouv.qc.ca/strategie/consultation/liste-des-memoires.htm>, mémoire 72>

7 Maxime Voliant a expliqué les motiva-

tions de ce rassemblement lors de sa

conférence intitulée « Les jeunes des

Premières nations du Québec et leur

culture traditionnelle », et présentée

le 28 mars 2003, au colloque GFTIC-

CIÉRA à l'Université Laval.

Pour consulter l'ensemble des références,

voir la version électronique de ce numéro

sur le site web du PRP à

<www.recherchehopolitique.gc.ca>

Rapports et publications d'intérêt

Aboriginal Policy Research Vol. 1-5: Proceedings from the 2002 and 2006 Aboriginal Policy Research Conferences.

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ra/abus/ctu_f.html>

Aboriginal Well-being: Canada's Continuing Challenge.

Dirigé par Jerry P. White, Dan Beavon, et Nicholas Spence. Thompson

Educational Publishing, 2007.

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ra/abus/ctu_f.html>

Redéfinir le mode d'évaluation de la réussite de l'apprentissage chez

les Premières nations, les Métis et les Inuits.

Conseil canadien sur l'apprentissage, novembre 2007.

<<http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Newsroom/Releases/RedefiningSuccessInAboriginalLearning.htm?language=FR>>

The Potential Contribution of Aboriginal Canadians to Labour Force, Employment, Productivity and Output Growth in Canada, 2001-2017.

Centre d'étude des niveaux de vie, novembre 2007.

<<http://www.csis.ca/reports/csis2007-04.pdf>>

Enquête portant sur les services de protection de la jeunesse dans la

baie d'Ungava et la baie d'Hudson - Rapport.

Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse,

avril 2007.

<http://www.cdpcd.jq.ca/fr/publications/docs/rapport_Nunavik_francais.pdf>

Agissons maintenant pour les enfants et les jeunes métis, inuits et des

Premières Nations.

Rapports du Conseil national du bien-être social, volume 127.

Conseil national du bien-être social, automne 2007.

<<http://www.ncwcnbes.net/fr/research/TimeToAct-AgissonsMaintenant.html>>

La réussite scolaire des Autochtones.

Commission de l'éducation, gouvernement du Québec, février 2007.

<<http://www.assnat.qc.ca/fr/37legislature2/commissions/CE/rapport-autochtones.pdf>>

Que sont les enfants devenus?

Ressource en ligne sur les pensionnats indiens au Canada.

Fondation autochtone de l'espoir, novembre 2007.

<<http://www.wherethechildren.ca>>

du Québec et de la jeunesse auquel étaient conviés des représentants des jeunes des Premières nations. Les réalités et les défis débattus lors de ce sommet, bien éloignés de leurs préoccupations, ont conduit, selon Maxime Volland⁷, les représentants des Premières nations à organiser leur propre cercle de consultation qui a donné lieu à la rédaction d'un premier rapport, « Le nouveau cercle. Rassemblement des jeunes des Premières nations du Québec et du Labrador », (2001).

Être jeune d'une Première nation rend-voile à des particularités identitaires : un attachement profond et durable à la communauté ou à la nation d'appartenance, définissant une identité collective y compris pour les jeunes vivant en milieu urbain partis en ville pour intégrer un cursus universitaire ou chercher un travail; des liens familiaux et intergénérationnels qui prévalent dans l'expression de son identité personnelle; un positionnement qui doit se faire, paradoxalement, sous les jugements de la société non autochtone, et avec elle. C'est donc dans un paysage complexe de représentations sociales, de jugements et de positionnements que se construit l'expérience identitaire des jeunes des Premières nations, qui sont, au final, bien d'autres choses avant d'être jeune et Autochtone et qui font bien d'autres choses que de choisir, unanimement, la destruction pour seul refuge.

Il faut cependant se garder de sortir de son contexte une telle catégorie, qui n'ont rien en commun, sous peine de confirmer la vieille intuition de sociologue français Pierre Bourdieu (1980) pour qui la jeunesse ne serait qu'un mot. Si le Secrétariat à la Jeunesse du Québec n'a pas de politique spécifique destinée aux jeunes des Premières nations, les débats et les actions se sont inscrits dans le premier plan d'action jeunesse 2002-2005, commun à tous les jeunes de la Province. En août 2005, le Conseil des Jeunes des Premières Nations du Québec et du Labrador a d'ailleurs présenté au gouvernement du Québec un rapport dans lequel il identifie une série de recommandations exprimant les spécificités des réalités autochtones et les priorités à suivre dans les politiques publiques destinées aux jeunes Autochtones :

1. Favoriser le rapprochement entre jeunes et aînés,
2. Améliorer les services destinés aux jeunes des Premières nations,
3. Favoriser la réussite éducative et l'insertion professionnelle,
4. Améliorer la santé, et
5. Accroître leur présence dans la société, à la fois dans le monde et dans leurs milieux de vie, à travers des échanges plus nombreux avec la population non autochtone⁸.

En 2000, le gouvernement péquiste soutenait l'organisation du Sommet

de symboles et de discours que rendent accessibles différents espaces d'échanges : forêt et territoire, communauté et milieu urbain, rassemblements pan-amérindiens, nouvelles technologies... Ces espaces d'expression et d'affirmation ne peuvent être dissociés l'un de l'autre puisqu'ils représentent les lieux de l'expérience contemporaine des jeunes dans lesquels ceux-ci s'engagent avec plus ou moins de conviction, avec plus ou moins de réussite, avec ou moins de désillusions.

Conclusion

Ainsi, avant d'être jeune Autochtone, on est avant tout Abénakise, originaire de Wôlinak, membre d'une famille et fille de ses parents. En fonction de l'interlocuteur, on est avant tout la sœur de son frère avant d'être de Betsiamites face à un jeune d'une autre famille de Betsiamites, on est avant tout de Wemotaci avant d'être Atikamekw face à un jeune atikamekw de Manawan, on est avant tout Algonquin avant d'être Indien face à un Mohawk, on est avant tout Indien, plus politiquement correct membre d'une Première nation, avant d'être Autochtone face à un Blanc. Le terme de jeune Autochtone est un raccourci utile pour comprendre, d'un point de vue politique, les réalités et les défis des nouvelles générations des Premières nations; utile, également pour développer, d'un point de vue social, des outils d'intervention. Mais

avec ses propres référents identitaires), de génération est intégré dans le processus de la vie. Les liens entre généra-tions, entre passé et présent, forment un cycle continu, une perpétuelle rennaissance, confirmant l'importance accordée aux dynamiques de transmission des savoirs et aux relations intergénérationnelles et familiales chez les Premières nations et 2^o la maladresse, largement répandue, qui consiste à parler des « jeunes » sans tenir compte des relations qu'ils entretiennent avec les autres généra-tions, la famille, la communauté, la ville, la forêt, bref avec la complexité de leurs milieux de vie.

La relation à la société non autochtone

En plus de construire son expérience sociale et personnelle dans une relation constante aux deux autres généra-tions, à la famille, à la communauté ou à la nation, les jeunes des Premières nations doivent également se positionner face à la société non autochtone. Au Canada, aborder les réalités des jeunes des Premières nations en termes de rupture culturelle, de crise identitaire ou de perte de repères est aujourd'hui devenu un lieu commun. Suicides, drogues, alcoolisme, souffrance et violence sociales sont des réalités, que ce soit dans les communautés ou en milieu urbain, qui alimentent les représentations sociales, orientent les analyses scientifiques et justifient les projets de recherche. Dans les discours publics, les jeunes subiraient tous passivement le contexte actuel de transition sociale, victimes contemporaines d'un héritage où s'entremêlent tentatives d'assimilation et négations de droits et d'identités. Ils seraient tous perdus entre deux références, celle de leurs aîné(e)s et

celle de la société dominante, lieu de la modernité avancée. Régulièrement reprises dans les médias, ces réalités sont devenues indissociables de la « culture des jeunes » en milieu autochtones contemporains : parler des jeunes Autochtones, c'est parler du taux de suicide, de pauvreté, de chômage, de décrochage et de sous-éducation. Ainsi, très tôt, les jeunes des Premières nations doivent

apprendre à se construire dans le regard de la société non autochtone et de représentations sociales persistantes.

Que font les jeunes? Espaces d'expression et d'affirmation

Continuer à évoquer les réalités des jeunes en termes de *problème* et de *souffrance*, à valoriser les projets *contre* le suicide et à élaborer des programmes de *thérapie* ne fait que rappeler les maux à combattre, et non les projets à soutenir. Il s'agit plutôt ici de considérer les jeunes comme des acteurs des transformations de leur société. De nombreuses communautés, institutions et structures autochtones ont pris en compte ce changement de paradigme : on ne parle plus de marches contre le suicide mais de marches et de projets pour la vie, on préfère le terme de mieux-être à celui de guérison, de bien-être à celui de souffrance, de ressourcement à celui de thérapie. La prévention et la promotion de la vie font place aux politiques de répression, de moralisation et d'encadrement de la jeunesse.

C'est dans un paysage complexe de représentations sociales, de jugements et de positionnements que se construit l'expérience identitaire des jeunes des Premières nations.

Sous l'impulsion de nombreuses personnes-ressources, et notamment celles issues de cette génération des pensionnats, de nombreux jeunes entrent dans les représentations ancrées dans les représentations sociales locales et nationales : celle de la destruction comme mode d'expression. En investissant les conseils de bande, en créant leurs propres institutions (conseils des

jeunes), en s'engageant dans des associations nationales (voir par exemple la *Labrador Inuit Youth* (LIY)³, la *Saputit Youth Association of Nunavik*⁴ ou encore le Conseil des jeunes des Premières nations du Québec et du Labrador dont il sera question plus loin), les jeunes Autochtones revendiquent des responsabilités accrues et valorisent l'initiative comme nouveau modèle de reconnaissance sociale. Au niveau international, la représentation des jeunes s'organisent : « Nous encourageons le système des Nations unies à inclure les jeunes dans ses activités et nous demandons la création d'une unité au sein de toutes les agences des Nations unies pour les jeunes Autochtones »⁵. (Mme Heather Minton-Lightening, représentante de la jeunesse autochtone à l'Instance permanente sur les questions autochtones de l'ONU). À travers le développement de la musique, de la littérature et des arts en général, les jeunes répondent au changement par une variété d'aspirations et d'influences qui se façonnent dans un processus complexe d'appropriation de signes,

ont chacune leur responsabilité dans le contexte contemporain. Les aînés, hommes et femmes qui ont connu le mode de vie nomade, sont devenus les icônes des processus de mise en valeur de la culture et des traditions. Ils sont considérés comme les dépositaires des savoirs locaux, des guides régulièrement consultés. Malgré la profonde distension des relations entre les enfants et leurs grands-

des jeunes. L'intellectuel Vine Deloria Jr. insistait sur l'importance de la famille comme premier ancrage identitaire : « Les gens en Amérique n'ont, en pratique, pas d'identité personnelle dans le sens où les Indiens peuvent la ressentir. Quand vous rencontrez un Indien, la plupart du temps, la question c'est « D'où viens-tu ? », suivi de « Qui est ta famille ? ». Dans la société américaine, on vous demande d'où

« Mon grand-père à moi il me dit qu'à l'âge de 15 ans il était rendu autonome, il avait plus besoin de personne pour s'occuper de lui, qu'il était même en mesure de s'occuper des autres. À 15 ans, nous on commence la vie. Ensuite, je pense à la génération qui a suivi, c'est ceux qui ont été enlevés de leur famille, ils ont vécu un drame qu'on essaie encore de guérir et puis parfois même d'oublier. Mais eux au moins, on a réussi à leur confier très de bonne heure des responsabilités. Parce que certains d'entre eux à l'âge de 20-23 ans, ça c'est à l'époque je dirai de l'émergence des conseils de bande en tant qu'instances représentatives et administratives dans les communautés, qui commencent à se développer, eux on leur a donné tout de suite cette responsabilité. En partie, c'est la génération qui les a précédés qui leur a confié cette responsabilité là, étant donné que le monde changeait très vite, qu'on vivait en communauté. [...] », (P.M., 28 ans, Atikamekw de Manawan, colloque du CIERA 2005).

parents (la sédentarisation ayant bouleversé la transmission des savoirs par l'expérience et l'observation), les aînés sont au cœur des représentations identitaires des jeunes. Les jeunes doivent se positionner dans le regard des aînés, mais également dans le regard d'une autre génération, celle des pensionnats, qui a pris très tôt ses responsabilités politiques. Principaux acteurs des changements politiques des années 70, de nombreux membres de cette génération occupent encore aujourd'hui les postes clés dans les domaines sociaux, culturels et politiques.

Ancrage familial

tu viens et ce que tu fais » (Deloria, 1997 : 218 [traduction]). Être jeune, c'est ainsi avant tout s'inscrire dans un rapport de parenté et de filiation qui rejait dans d'autres sphères de la société. Par exemple, la responsabilité (et non la propriété) des territoires ancestraux actuellement revendiqués est régie par des dynamiques familiales de gestion, d'occupation, d'utilisation et de transmission. La dimension familiale prévaut dans la présentation de soi, et les termes ne manquent pas : chez les Atikamekw, par exemple, on est *nosim* (petit-fils), *nostimic* (arrière-petit-fils), *octesimian* (frère aîné), ou *nimis* (sœur), avant d'être « jeune ». Chez les Inuit, on est avant tout *ingutag* (petit-enfant), *ingutaliqutit* (arrière-petit-enfant) ou *ani* (frère).

Modèle relationnel et modèle généalogique

Peut-on parler de particularités autochtones dans les rapports entre les générations, à la famille, aux grands-parents et aux ancêtres? Non pas que nous, les *Blancs*, négligeons nos grands-parents et nos aînés. Mais nous sommes loin de faire de leur disparition un enjeu culturel, social et identitaire. Les aînés ne se retrouvent pas au cœur des préoccupations des jeunes québécois lorsqu'il s'agit de continuité sociale et culturelle, de survie collective, d'affirmation identitaire ou de revendications politiques. Pour l'anthropologue Tim Ingold, le rapport entre les générations dans de nombreuses sociétés autochtones (notamment celle traditionnellement nomade) suit un *modèle relationnel* qui s'opposerait au *modèle généalogique* caractéristique de nos sociétés occidentales (Ingold, 2000 : 136). Ingold explique que dans ces dernières, le rapport aux ancêtres, aux aînés, aux générations précédentes, bref, au passé, s'inscrit dans une continuité figée et linéaire. Les générations se succèdent les unes aux autres sur la ligne du temps. Chaque nouvelle génération remplace la précédente et s'en distingue par une expérience, un contexte, des événements qui en font sa particularité au point de créer un « fossé des générations » (voir Mannheim 1990 ou Attias-Donfut 1988). Le modèle généalogique occidental, caractéristique de la modernité, suppose que « le présent n'existe pour nous seulement grâce à l'inexorable suppression du passé duquel il provient » (Descola, 1996 : 226 [traduction], dans Ingold, 2000 : 136). Alors que dans le modèle généalogique la vie est contenue dans le concept de génération (chaque génération mène une vie qui la caractérise,

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Cette question, posée comme titre, n'est pas seulement une référence à la célèbre question de Montesquieu (comment peut-on être Persan?), mais surtout un clin d'œil à sa reprise par l'écrivain québécois Jean-Paul Desbiens, à la suite des événements de la crise d'Oka (Desbiens, 1993). Si les « jeunes » constituent une catégorie sociale privilégiée en recherche au point d'en faire une tradition de l'anthropologie, de la sociologie et plus largement des sciences sociales (Buchholz, 2002; Galland, 2001), force est de constater qu'ils sont encore négligés dans les études autochtones au Québec. La parole des jeunes est pourtant devenue incontournable dès que l'on s'intéresse aux enjeux et aux défis sociaux, politiques et culturels que soulèvent les réalités des Premières nations.

Dernière les chiffres et la vitalité démographique qui contraste avec la société non autochtone, que signifie être jeune et Autochtone aujourd'hui? Il s'agit dans cet article¹ de jeter quelques bases de réflexion afin de mieux comprendre qui sont les jeunes, qu'est-ce qui les distingue de leurs jeunes voisins non autochtones, comment ils s'organisent pour avoir une voix au chapitre et enfin, peuvent prendre en considération leurs réalités et leurs aspirations.

Qui sont les jeunes Autochtones?

Une catégorie politique récente

Pour nous, observateurs, responsables de politiques et intervenants, le concept de jeune renvoie avant tout à une catégorie sociale et politique. Maxime Voilland, encore coordonnateur du Conseil des Jeunes des Premières Nations du Québec et du Labrador (CJPNQL) en 2005, rappelait par exemple que pour son Conseil la

L'un des premiers défis pour les jeunes Autochtones est de formuler leur rôle et de construire leur expérience dans la continuité et en relations étroites avec les générations précédentes qui

Relations intergénérationnelles

catégorie « jeune » s'entendait pour les individus âgés de 18 à 30 ans alors que la Commission de développement économique des Premières nations du Québec et du Labrador retient la tranche d'âge 18-35 ans. L'Instance permanente sur les questions autochtones à l'ONU a choisi quant à elle les 15-24 ans. En milieu autochtone au Canada, cette catégorie a été consacrée il y a une trentaine d'années seulement. La scolarisation obligatoire dans les pensionnats indiens, entraînant notamment la mise en parenthèse des rites traditionnels de passage de la vie (marquant différents passages de l'enfance à l'âge adulte), compte parmi les facteurs qui ont participé au découpage générationnel des sociétés autochtones. *Jeunes, uns, ou génération des pensionnats* sont des catégories récentes qui ont pris une importance grandissante à partir des années 70, dans un contexte d'affirmation identitaire, de revendications politiques et territoriales et de réappro-priation culturelle. Mais que signifie cette catégorie au niveau local? Pour comprendre la portée d'un tel concept d'un point de vue local, j'ai retenu trois dimensions des processus de construction identitaire qui distinguent les jeunes Autochtones de leurs voisins non autochtones : la relation entre les générations, à la famille et à une société majoritaire. Je n'ai pas la place de discuter ici des enjeux liés à l'éducation et aux cursus adaptés tant le débat demanderait un article en soi². Mais ils représentent une autre dimension essentielle qui fait la spécificité des défis posés à la jeunesse autochtone.

de la future croissance démographique pourrait aussi être affectée par la mobilité ethnique. Comme dans le cas de la population de Métis, il faudra poursuivre les analyses et les études avant de pouvoir intégrer dans le modèle de projections démographiques les estimations concernant l'ampleur et la dynamique de la mobilité ethnique. D'ici à ce que la mobilité ethnique et ses incidences sur la croissance démographique soient mieux comprises, ils demeureront un autre facteur d'incertitude quant à la taille future de cette population autochtone.

La jeunesse de la population d'Indiens non inscrits continuera d'entraîner des augmentations considérables du nombre de ménages et de familles.

- Le nombre de ménages d'Indiens non inscrits devrait augmenter de 67 % en 2026, pour s'établir à environ 75 400.
- On prévoit que le nombre de familles d'Indiens non inscrits passera de 35 600 en 2001 à 65 500 en 2026.

Investir dans les jeunes Autochtones

On le voit, la population autochtone est en plein essor et très jeune comparativement à la population canadienne et, malgré son vieillissement attendu, les projections démographiques semblent indiquer que la tendance se maintiendra pendant un bon moment. Particulièrement marquée dans les Prairies et le Nord canadien, la croissance de la population autochtone devrait aussi être notable en milieu urbain et dans les réserves. En revanche, la population

canadienne est beaucoup plus âgée que la population autochtone et elle entre dans une période au cours de laquelle une grande partie de son effectif se retirera du marché du travail.

La jeunesse de la population autochtone continuera d'avoir des implications multiples pour diverses initiatives socioéconomiques. On peut améliorer le bien-être général des Autochtones en accordant une attention particulière aux investissements faits dans l'éducation. En effet, il est bien documenté que la scolarisation améliore la participation au marché du travail, réduit la nécessité des paiements de transfert et influe sur la situation socioéconomique et le bien-être général.

Un accroissement démographique rapide amène aussi son lot de défis. À mesure que les jeunes Autochtones vieilliront et commenceront à former des ménages et des familles, on peut s'attendre aussi à ce que des pressions accrues s'exercent sur les ressources disponibles, comme les logements, qui se feront sentir davantage dans les réserves et en milieu urbain.

Notes

- 1 Famille de recensement : Couple marié (avec ou sans enfants des deux conjoints ou de l'un d'eux), couple vivant en union libre (avec ou sans enfants des deux partenaires ou de l'un d'eux) ou parent seul (peu importe son état matrimonial) demeurant avec au moins un enfant dans le même logement. Un couple vivant en union libre peut être de sexe opposé ou de même sexe.
- 2 La grande majorité de la population inuite réside dans l'une des quatre régions faisant l'objet de revendications territoriales inuites : le Nunavut, le Nunavik au Québec, la région d'Inuv
- 3 Région urbaine, selon la définition de Statistique Canada, désigne un territoire qui a une concentration démographique d'au moins 1 000 habitants et une densité de population d'au moins 400 habitants au kilomètre carré. Région rurale, selon la définition utilisée ici, englobe les Inuits habitant dans des réserves. (Au Canada, à peine 4,5 % des Inuits environ habitent dans des réserves.)
- 4 Selon cette étude, le scénario de croissance modérée pour les projections de populations inuites part du principe que l'espérance de vie demeurera constante tout au long de la période de projection (d'après les projections de la population, des ménages et des familles autochtones, 2001-2026, AINCC, SCHL, 2007).
- 5 Dans la documentation, « mobilité ethnique » s'entend de la mobilité ethnique intergénérationnelle résultant du changement d'appartenance ethnique d'une personne au fil du temps (c'est-à-dire entre les recensements).
- 6 En 2001, la population autochtone totale ajustée était de 1 064 300 et comptait environ 60 % d'Indiens inscrits, 26 % des Métis, 10 % d'Indiens non inscrits et 4 % d'Inuits.
- 7 Cette prévision repose sur l'hypothèse selon laquelle les régions rurales continueront de perdre une partie de leur population d'Indiens inscrits au profit des réserves et des centres urbains. 2008, Stewart Clatworthy et Mary-Jane Norris, *Aboriginal Mobility and Migration: Trends, Recent Patterns, and Implications: 1971-2001*, Aboriginal Policy Research, Moving Forward, Making a Difference, Volume IV, chapitre 13, Thompson Educational Publishing, INC., Toronto, Canada.

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des 20 prochaines années. Ce ralentissement s'explique d'une part par un déclin de la fécondité et d'autre part par une perte du droit à l'inscription au Registre des Indiens chez un nombre grandissant de descendants d'Indiens inscrits (voir l'encadré intitulé *Perte du droit à l'inscription au Registre des Indiens*).

La jeunesse et la fécondité de la population d'Indiens inscrits continueront d'entraîner des augmentations considérables du nombre de ménages et de familles, surtout dans les réserves.

- Le nombre de ménages d'Indiens inscrits devrait avoir augmenté de 77 % en 2026, pour s'établir à environ 403 600.
- Dans les réserves, le nombre de ménages d'Indiens inscrits devrait doubler entre 2001 et 2026, pour atteindre 191 600. En milieu urbain, l'augmentation prévue est de 70 %.
- On prévoit qu'il y aura 361 300 familles d'Indiens inscrits en 2026, soit une augmentation de 87 %.

Les Indiens non inscrits, la population autochtone connaissant la croissance la plus rapide

La population d'Indiens non inscrits est la population autochtone qui connaît la croissance la plus rapide et elle pourrait aussi devenir la plus jeune d'ici la fin du premier trimestre du 21^e siècle.

- Après rajustement des chiffres pour tenir compte de la non participation au sondage et du sous-dénombrement, on estime qu'il y avait 110 300 Indiens non inscrits en 2001.
- De tous les groupes autochtones, ce sont les Indiens non inscrits qui devraient connaître la croissance démographique la plus rapide

durant la période de 2001 à 2026. Leur nombre devrait atteindre 195 600 en 2006, soit une augmentation de 77 % par rapport à 2001. La population d'Indiens non inscrits augmenterait actuellement à un rythme de 2,2 % par année. Contrairement aux autres groupes autochtones, elle devrait augmenter de 2,5 % par année jusqu'en 2016 (cf. tableau 4).

- En 2001, la population d'Indiens non inscrits était relativement jeune, avec 52 % de son effectif âgé de moins de 25 ans. Contrairement aux autres groupes autochtones, les Indiens non inscrits devraient voir les enfants et les jeunes former une part *grandissante* de leur population : d'ici 2026, environ 55 % des Indiens non inscrits auront moins de 25 ans. La population d'Indiens non inscrits pourrait donc avoir la structure par âge la plus jeune de tous les groupes autochtones d'ici 2026. En 2001, près des trois quarts des Indiens non inscrits vivaient en milieu urbain. D'ici 2026, la
- En 2001, près des trois quarts des Indiens non inscrits vivaient en milieu urbain. D'ici 2026, la

Comme pour d'autres groupes autochtones, la fécondité joue un rôle important dans la croissance de la population d'Indiens non inscrits. Toutefois, si la fécondité et la perte du droit à l'inscription peuvent expliquer en grande partie cette croissance, comme dans le cas de la population

Les taux de croissance élevés prévus pour la population d'Indiens non inscrits sont attribuables en grande partie à l'augmentation prévue du nombre de descendants d'Indiens inscrits qui ne seront pas admissibles à l'inscription. Cette perte du droit à l'inscription affectera non seulement le taux de croissance de la population d'Indiens non inscrits, mais se traduira aussi par une future structure par âge très jeune.

* Projections de la population, des ménages et des familles autochtones, 2001-2020, AINC, SCHL, 2007.

** Statistique Canada, no 91-520-XIF au catalogue.

Année	Indiens non inscrits	Indiens inscrits	Métis	Inuits	Population canadienne*
2001-2006	2,2 %	1,9 %	1,4 %	2,1 %	1,0 %
2006-2011	2,5 %	1,7 %	1,4 %	2,1 %	0,8 %
2011-2016	2,5 %	1,5 %	1,3 %	2,0 %	0,8 %
2016-2021	2,3 %	1,3 %	1,2 %	1,8 %	0,7 %
2021-2026	2,1 %	1,1 %	1,0 %	1,6 %	0,7 %

TABLÉAU 4
Taux de croissance annuels moyens prévus des populations autochtones* et canadienne, scénario de croissance modérée, 2001-2026**

Perte du droit à l'inscription au Registre des Indiens

Les modifications apportées en 1985 à la *Loi sur les Indiens* (mieux connue sous le nom de « projet de loi C-31 ») ont changé les règles régissant le droit à l'inscription au Registre des Indiens. Ce texte législatif a restitué le statut d'Indien inscrit aux personnes radiées du Registre des Indiens en vertu de certaines règles des versions antérieures de la Loi. Il établit aussi de nouvelles règles sur la transmission du droit à l'inscription d'enfants nés d'un Indien inscrit, le 17 avril 1985 ou après cette date. Une personne peut s'inscrire au Registre en vertu du Paragraphe 6(1) de la *Loi sur les Indiens* quand ses deux parents sont (ou ont le droit d'être) inscrits; et en vertu du Paragraphe 6(2) quand l'un de ses parents est inscrit (ou a le droit de l'être). L'ascendance mixte indienne/non indienne (unions mixtes) sur deux générations successives aboutit, à la seconde génération, à la perte du droit à l'inscription.

Conséquence de ces nouvelles règles de transmission du droit à l'inscription et de la fréquence des unions mixtes, une proportion grandissante de descendants sera privée du droit à l'inscription au Registre des Indiens, ce qui à long terme aura de profondes implications pour la population d'Indiens inscrits. Les projections à long terme fondées sur l'analyse de 1999 semblent indiquer que « vers la fin de la cinquième génération, plus aucun enfant ne naîtra en ayant droit à l'inscription » (Stewart Clatworthy 2001 : *Révaluation des répercussions démographiques du projet de loi C-31*, AINC, 2004).

La fécondité et les améliorations de l'espérance de vie jouent un rôle important dans la croissance démographique des Métis. Cependant, une partie importante de leur croissance démographique passée est aussi attribuable à des changements de l'identité ethnique autodéclarée au fil du temps et d'une génération à l'autre, un phénomène appelé *mobilité ethnique*. Pour la population de Métis, environ 60 % de la croissance observée entre 1986 et 2001 était attribuable à des changements de l'auto-identification (Guimond, 2007). Il faudra toutefois poursuivre les analyses et les études avant de pouvoir intégrer dans le modèle de projections

démographiques les estimations concernant l'ampleur et la dynamique de la mobilité ethnique. D'ici à ce que la mobilité ethnique et ses incidences sur la croissance démographique soient mieux comprises, la mobilité et ses incidences demeureront un autre facteur d'incertitude quant à la taille future de cette population autochtone (Kerr *et al.*, 2003). Comme le montre le tableau 3, en 2001 la plus grande concentration d'enfants et de jeunes Métis se trouvait dans les Prairies, en particulier en Alberta et au Manitoba. La majeure partie de la population de Métis demeurera vraisemblablement concentrée dans les Prairies.

La croissance de la population d'Indiens inscrits devrait ralentir au cours

- En 2001, la population d'Indiens inscrits était jeune, puisque 52 % de ses membres avaient moins de 25 ans. En dépit d'un certain vieillissement, cette population demeurera assez jeune, avec 39 % de son effectif âgé de moins de 25 ans en 2026.
- Les populations des réserves et en 10 %, en région rurale. Elles habitaient en milieu urbain et taient les réserves, tandis que 37 % (53 %) des Indiens inscrits habitaient en milieu urbain devraient augmenter, de 64 % et 33 %, respectivement, entre 2001 et 2026. À l'inverse, la population rurale vivait hors réserve devrait diminuer de 10 %.
- En 2001, à peine plus de la moitié (45 %) de la population de 15 ans et plus était inscrite au Registre des Indiens. À partir des chiffres rajustés, l'on prévoit que la population d'Indiens inscrits passera d'environ 633 600 à 920 100 d'ici 2026, soit une augmentation de 45 %.
- En 2001, à peine plus de la moitié (53 %) des Indiens inscrits habitaient en milieu urbain et taient les réserves, tandis que 37 % (53 %) des Indiens inscrits habitaient en milieu urbain devraient augmenter, de 64 % et 33 %, respectivement, entre 2001 et 2026. À l'inverse, la population rurale vivait hors réserve devrait diminuer de 10 %.

Les Indiens inscrits, le plus grand des groupes autochtones

- La jeunesse et la fécondité de la population de Métis se traduira par des augmentations importantes du nombre de nouveaux ménages et de familles, en particulier en milieu urbain. En 2001, il y avait 119 800 ménages de Métis selon les estimations, dont 68 % en milieu urbain. Le nombre de ménages de Métis devrait augmenter de 60 % entre 2001 et 2026.
- On prévoit qu'il y aura 164 200 familles de Métis en 2026, soit 69 % de plus qu'en 2001.

croissance est rapide. Après rajuste-
ment des données pour tenir
compte de la non participation au
sondage et du sous dénombrement,
la population inuite a été établie à
environ 46 200 en 2001 et devrait
croître de 62 % d'ici 2026.

- En 2001, la population inuite était
plus jeune de 17 ans que la popula-
tion canadienne (tableau 2).
- Par rapport aux autres populations
autochtones, les Inuits ont la struc-
ture par âge la plus jeune : la ma-
jorité des enfants inuits ont moins de
15 ans.
- Le Nunavut accueille la plus forte
concentration d'Inuits au pays. En
2001, il comptait 51 % de la popu-
lation inuite, suivi du Québec à
21 %, de la région atlantique à
11 % et des Territoires du Nord
Ouest à 9 %².
- La majorité (74 %) des Inuits vivait
dans des régions rurales, les autres
(26 %) habitaient en milieu
urbain³. La distribution régionale
de la population inuite ne devrait
pas changer notablement d'ici la
fin du premier quart du XXI^e siècle.
Cependant, les projections demo-
graphiques indiquent que le pour-
centage d'Inuits habitant au
Nunavut pourrait s'élever à 54 %
d'ici 2026.

La grande fécondité de la population
inuite joue un rôle important dans sa
croissance démographique. En 2001,
ce taux de fécondité était estimé à
3,4 enfants par femme. À titre de
comparaison, il est de 1,5 enfant par
femme pour la population cana-
dienne, de 1,9 pour les Indiens non
inscrits, de 2,1 pour les Métis et de
2,8 pour les Indiens inscrits. Le taux
de fécondité des Inuites devrait dimi-
nuer à l'avenir, mais demeurera vrai-
semblablement bien supérieur à celui
de l'ensemble de la population.

L'amélioration de l'espérance de vie
joue aussi habituellement un rôle

TABLEAU 3

Estimation de la répartition régionale des enfants et jeunes Métis
(de 0 à 24 ans), scénario de croissance modérée, 2001 et 2026

Région	Répartition en % 2001	Répartition en % 2026
Canada	100 %	100 %
Colombie-Britannique	14 %	12 %
Alberta	24 %	26 %
Saskatchewan	17 %	18 %
Manitoba	20 %	23 %
Ontario	15 %	12 %
Québec	4 %	3 %
Région atlantique	4 %	4 %
Nord	1 %	2 %

Source : Projections de la population, des ménages et des familles autochtones, 2001-2026, AINC et SCHL, 2007.

important dans la croissance demo-
graphique des populations autoch-
tones. Cependant, pour la population
inuite, une étude récente ne révèle
aucune amélioration à ce chapitre
pour la période de 1991 à 2001
(Wilkins *et al.*, 2008). Si la tendance se
maintient, il est peu probable qu'une
amélioration de l'espérance de vie
contribue notablement à la croissance
démographique des Inuits⁴.

La jeunesse et le taux de fécondité
toujours élevé de la population inuite
contribueront à une hausse marquée
du nombre de ménages et de familles.

- En 2001, le nombre de ménages
inuits devrait augmenter de 93 %,
pour s'établir à 21 600 d'ici 2026.
- D'ici 2026, on prévoit que le
nombre de familles inuites aura
plus que doublé, passant de
11 500 à 24 100.
- On prévoit une croissance impor-
tante du nombre de familles mono-
parentales dans tous les groupes
autochtones, mais c'est dans la
population inuite qu'elle devrait se
faire le plus rapidement (cf. figure

Les Métis, le plus vieux des groupes autochtones

3). Entre 2001 et 2026, le nombre
de familles monoparentales inuites
devrait plus que doubler selon les
projections.

Les Métis forment la deuxième popu-
lation autochtone en importance au
Canada, mais aussi la plus âgée.

- Le chiffre rajusté pour la popula-
tion de Métis était de 274 200 en
2001. Selon les projections, cette
population pourrait croître de 37 %
entre 2001 et 2026, pour s'établir
à 376 500 personnes.
- La population de Métis, avec un
âge médian de 26,8 ans, était de
dix ans plus jeune que la popula-
tion canadienne en 2001.
- Les deux tiers des Métis vivent
actuellement en milieu urbain.

Cette population urbaine devrait
avoir augmenté de 40 % au cours
des 25 prochaines années, pour
atteindre 259 900 personnes
en 2026.

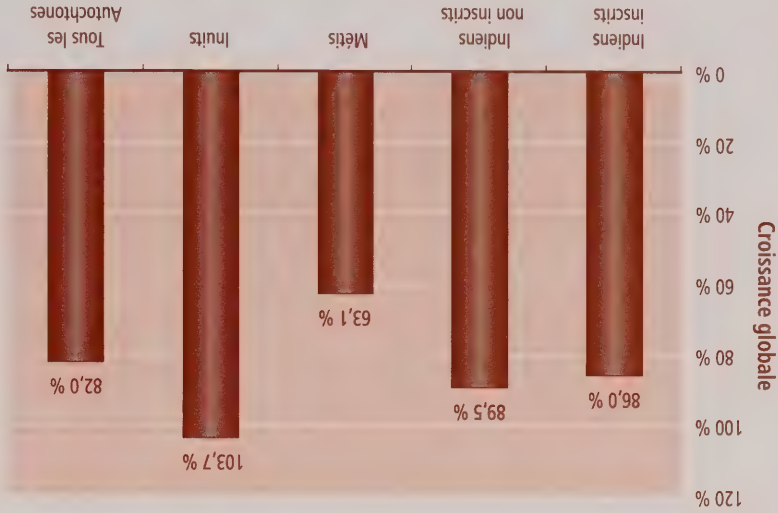
TABLEAU 2 Âge médian et population de moins de 25 ans pour les groupes autochtones* et le Canada**, 2001 et 2026

Année	Population	Âge médian (en années)	% Pop 0-14 ans	% Pop 15-24 ans
2001	Inuits	20,1	40 %	19 %
	Métis	26,8	29 %	18 %
	Indiens inscrits	24,0	35 %	17 %
	Indiens non inscrits	23,8	35 %	17 %
	Population canadienne	37,2	19 %	14 %
2026	Inuits	25,3	32 %	18 %
	Métis	34,1	23 %	14 %
	Indiens inscrits	32,1	24 %	15 %
	Indiens non inscrits	22,2	35 %	20 %
	Population canadienne	43,3	15 %	11 %

* Projections de la population, des ménages et des familles autochtones, AINC, SCHL, scénario de croissance modérée, 2007.

** Statistique Canada, no 91-213-SCB au catalogue.

FIGURE 3 Projections de la croissance globale du nombre de familles monoparentales autochtones, 2001 et 2026, scénario de croissance modérée*



* Projections de la population, des ménages et des familles autochtones, 2001-2026, AINC et SCHL, 2007.

urbains augmenterait de 42 % pour atteindre 724 100 et celle des régions rurales connaîtrait une augmentation modeste, de 22 %, pour atteindre 246 800 d'ici 2026.

Un nombre de ménages et de familles plus élevé à l'avenir

À mesure que la population actuelle vieillit, les jeunes adultes autochtones seront de plus en plus nombreux à atteindre l'âge de former un ménage et une famille, ce qui entraînera une croissance rapide du nombre de ménages et de familles autochtones. Selon les projections, le nombre de ménages autochtones pourrait augmenter de 71 %, pour atteindre 692 100 d'ici 2026, tandis que le nombre de familles autochtones pourrait augmenter de 82 % pour atteindre 615 100 en 2026.

Un aspect important de la démographie des familles autochtones est le pourcentage élevé de familles monoparentales. Une famille autochtone sur quatre (26 %) est monoparentale, contre une famille canadienne sur six (16 %)¹. La grande majorité (87 %) des familles monoparentales autochtones est dirigée par une femme.

D'ici 2026, le nombre de familles monoparentales autochtones devrait atteindre 161 600 selon les projections, soit une hausse de 82 %. Ce sont les centres urbains qui accueillent le plus fort pourcentage de familles monoparentales, mais ce sont les réserves qui connaîtront la croissance la plus prononcée de ce type de famille (figure 2).

Les Inuits, le plus jeune de tous les groupes autochtones

- La population inuite est la plus jeune de toutes les populations autochtones du Canada, et sa

de la population canadienne. Les taux de croissance annuels moyens des populations autochtones varient selon les sous populations (cf. tableau 4).

La jeunesse de la structure par âge est une caractéristique commune des populations en croissance rapide. La figure 1 montre qu'en 2001, environ 51 % de la population autochtone était âgée de moins de 25 ans. L'âge médian était de 24,5 ans, contre 37,2 ans pour les Canadiens. Contrairement à la population canadienne, la population autochtone demeurera jeune à l'avenir, malgré des hausses considérables du nombre de personnes plus âgées. D'ici 2026, l'âge médian de la population autochtone serait de 31,0 ans, selon les projections, contre 43,3 ans pour la population canadienne.

Plus jeune dans les Prairies, le Nord et les réserves

Les Prairies et le Nord comptent des proportions très élevées d'enfants et de jeunes Autochtones. Les projections révèlent que la croissance démographique se poursuivra et que ces régions compteront aussi les populations autochtones les plus jeunes au Canada pendant plusieurs années (tableau 1). La jeunesse de la population autochtone de ces régions s'explique en partie par des taux de fécondité supérieurs.

À 25,5 ans, la population hors réserve (où deux Autochtones sur trois habitent) est assez jeune, mais la population autochtone des réserves est encore plus jeune, à 22,3 ans. Au cours des 20 prochaines années, on prévoit une croissance rapide de la population autochtone dans les réserves et les centres urbains. Plus précisément, la population autochtone des réserves devrait croître de 69 % pour atteindre 596 000 personnes en 2026, celle des milieux

TABLEAU 1

Âge médian des Autochtones, au Canada et dans les régions, 2001 et 2026

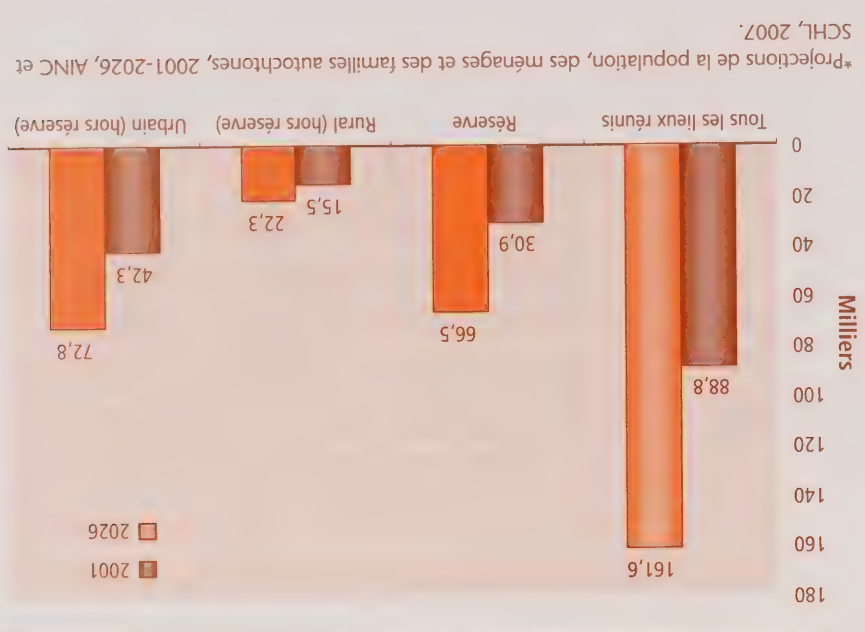
Région	Population autochtone*	Population régionale** (total)
	2001	2026
Colombie-Britannique	26,8	33,7
Alberta	23,2	30,7
Saskatchewan	20,4	27,8
Manitoba	22,9	28,9
Ontario	27,6	33,9
Québec	26,3	31,7
Région atlantique	25,4	31,9
Nord	22,7	28,3
Canada	24,5	31,0
	2001	2026
	44,0	37,9
	41,2	34,7
	42,8	36,4
	40,8	36,4
	42,4	36,7
	45,0	38,5
	47,3	38,3
	32,7	29,4
	43,3	37,2

*Projections de la population, des ménages et des familles autochtones, AINIC et SCHL, scénario de croissance modérée, 2007.

**Statistique Canada, numéros 91-213-SCB et 91-520-XIF au catalogue.

FIGURE 2

Projection des familles monoparentales autochtones, 2001 et 2026, scénario de croissance modérée, par lieu de résidence*



*Projections de la population, des ménages et des familles autochtones, 2001-2026, AINIC et SCHL, 2007.

Projections de la population, des ménages et des familles autochtones, 2001-2026

Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada (AINC), en partenariat avec la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (SCHL), a établi récemment une série de projections sur la population, les ménages et les familles autochtones sur une période de 25 ans, soit de 2001 à 2026. Le modèle de projections repose sur la méthode des composantes et a été conçu pour fournir des projections concurrentes pour quatre populations distinctes : les Métis, les Inuits, les Indiens non inscrits et les Indiens inscrits.

Les projections sont fondées sur le nombre de personnes qui se sont identifiées comme des Autochtones et/ou des personnes inscrites en vertu de la *Loi sur les Indiens* dans le Recensement de la population de 2001. Selon ce recensement, il y aurait environ 976 300 Autochtones au Canada. Cependant, en raison d'erreurs de sondage attribuables notamment à la non participation et au sous-dénombrement, l'effectif autochtone serait en réalité supérieur à ce nombre. Pour compenser ces erreurs de sondage, les données de base du Recensement de 2001 pour la population autochtone ont été rajustées. D'autres mises au point ont aussi été nécessaires pour classer les individus dans les quatre populations autochtones distinctes suivantes :

- Indien inscrit (peu importe l'origine)
- Indien non inscrit
- Métis
- Inuit

Ce processus a permis de prendre en compte chaque individu qui se déclarait Métis, Inuit ou Amérindien ainsi que inscrit en vertu de la *Loi sur les Indiens* dans le chiffre de base pour la population d'Indiens inscrits. Le total ainsi rajusté est de 1 064 300 Autochtones en 2001, ventilé comme suit : 633 600 Indiens inscrits, 274 200 Métis, 110 300 Indiens non inscrits et 46 200 Inuits.

données pour tenir compte de la non participation au sondage et du sous-dénombrement, la population autochtone était estimée à 1 064 300 personnes en 2001. On prévoit qu'elle aura augmenté de 47 % en 2026, pour atteindre 1 566 900 personnes. Le taux de croissance (1,8 %) de la population autochtone est presque le double de celui de la population

canadienne en général (1 %). Dans l'hypothèse d'un déclin modéré de la fécondité, cette croissance devrait ralentir entre 2001 et 2026, de 1,8 % à 1,2 %, mais demeurera néanmoins bien supérieure à la croissance prévue

- Les résultats présentés dans cet article utilisent les données de base et les projections issues de la série de projections précitées. Il convient de noter qu'en raison de ces rajustements, les chiffres de base utilisés dans cet article diffèrent des chiffres de population publiés ailleurs.
- Afin de refléter les tendances récentes observées pour la population autochtone, les projections présentées dans ce document se fondent sur un scénario de croissance modérée, qui se résume comme suit :
- Déclin modéré de la fécondité.
- Déclin modéré du volume de migration à un rythme observé pendant les années 1990. (En termes de migration intra-régionale nette, les résultats des analyses réalisées de 1996 à 2001 révèlent une tendance généralement uniforme des flux migratoires indiquant un apport net modeste en faveur des réserves, un exode des régions rurales et une légère migration de sortie à partir des milieux urbains).
- Amélioration progressive de l'espérance de vie à la naissance, sauf pour les Inuits (dont l'espérance de vie devrait demeurer stable).
- Stabilité actuelle des types d'unions et de la distribution du transfert de l'identité autochtone aux enfants. Ces projections comportent des hypothèses précises concernant la fécondité, les types d'unions et leurs incidences sur l'identité des enfants. Les enfants issus d'une union exogame (famille comptant un parent autochtone et un parent non autochtone) ou d'une union endogame (famille dont les parents viennent de différents groupes autochtones) n'auront pas toujours nécessairement la même identité que leurs parents (ils pourront s'identifier à un parent ou aux deux mais aussi ne s'identifier à aucun des deux).
- Déclin du taux de rétablissement du statut conformément aux dispositions de la *Loi sur les Indiens* de 1985.

Les peuples autochtones jeune pour les années à venir

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En plein essor depuis plusieurs dizaines d'années, la population autochtone est aussi très jeune par rapport à la population canadienne. Avec des taux de fécondité élevés et des améliorations modérées de l'espérance de vie, on prévoit que ces tendances se maintiendront pendant un bon moment.

La majorité des enfants et des jeunes Autochtones vit dans des familles biparentales, mais une proportion élevée vit aussi dans des familles monoparentales dirigées par des femmes. Compliquées par la diversité géographique et culturelle des populations autochtones, les caractéristiques démographiques des jeunes présentent plusieurs enjeux et défis pour les services de santé et d'éducation et les programmes socioéconomiques, en particulier

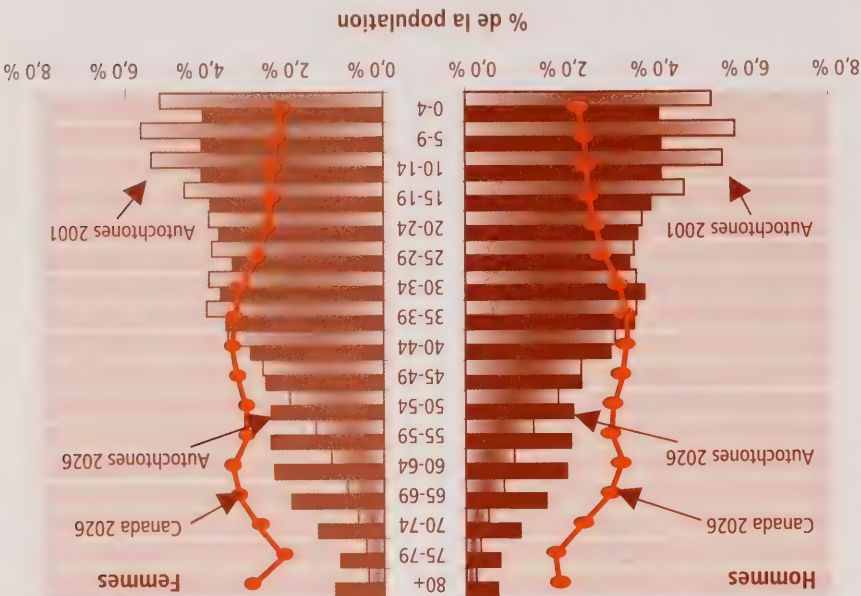
ceux qui sont destinés aux jeunes Autochtones.

Au-delà des implications de cette jeunesse pour les programmes destinés aux Autochtones, les jeunes Autochtones pourront constituer un élément important dans la population active du pays, à mesure que la main d'œuvre non autochtone diminuera en raison du vieillissement rapide de la population canadienne. Cet apport sera particulièrement pertinent dans les régions et les centres urbains comptant une importante population de jeunes Autochtones.

Une population jeune en plein essor

Dans le Recensement de 2001, environ 976 300 personnes se déclaraient Autochtones. Après rajustement des

FIGURE 1
Pyramide des âges pour les populations autochtone et canadienne, scénario de croissance modérée, 2001 et 2026



Sources : (1) Projections de la population, des ménages et des familles autochtones, 2001-2026, AINCC et SCHL, 2007; (2) Projections démographiques pour le Canada, les provinces et les territoires, 2005-2031, Statistique Canada, no 91-520-XIF au catalogue.

façons de participer au développement de la collectivité permet de mobiliser les ressources locales dans l'atteinte des priorités de la collectivité.

- Il est primordial d'arranger des lieux permettant aux jeunes, qu'ils soient étudiants universitaires, athlètes, jeunes de la rue, toxicomanes en rémission ou ex-détenus, de se rassembler, de prendre une pause loin des attentes du monde extérieur, de partager des expériences de vie et de recueillir de l'information afin de permettre le développement de leur identité.

L'appui aux interventions locales, par l'entremise d'efforts soutenus, diversifiés et coordonnés des gouvernements fédéral, provinciaux/territoriaux et autochtones permettra de retourner les jeunes Autochtones des choix qui pourraient nuire à leur avenir.

La pyramide démographique annonce une croissance explosive des jeunes Autochtones, scénario bien connu des chercheurs et des décideurs publics. Les organismes œuvrant dans le domaine judiciaire prévoient que les jeunes âgés de 15 à 29 ans sont les plus à risque de poser des gestes qui peuvent leur nuire ou troubler la paix des gens qu'ils côtoient. Les jeunes plus vulnérables peuvent être sensibles à l'image de protestataires vêtus d'habits de camouflage lors de confrontations comme celles de Caledonia, de Deseronto et d'Oka parce qu'elles présentent une réponse séduisante au dilemme identitaire auquel ils font face. Les coûts potentiels de l'inaction apparaissent clairement après une journée ou une semaine à faire la une des médias.

Les jeunes Autochtones ne sont pas près de se fondre dans la masse ou de disparaître. Ils veulent faire partie

Un avenir différent

intégrante de la société, mais d'une manière qui leur permette d'affirmer à la fois leur citoyenneté et leur identité autochtone. Ces jeunes découvrent qu'en vivant en harmonie avec ce qu'ils sont et ce qu'ils veulent devenir, ils retrouvent un peu de la sagesse de leurs aînés.

DeGagné rapporte, dans sa thèse, les propos d'un étudiant heureux et plein d'espoir qui vient de trouver un sens à sa vie :

[P]our la première fois de toute ma vie, mon éducation a un sens. Son but est d'ordre spirituel... et intellectuel. Je vois une solution... parce que nous sommes la solution. Moi, mon ami, ce que nous faisons ici représente la réponse à ce que les gens appellent « le problème indien ».

Cet étudiant venait de découvrir la sagesse de la tradition, telle que décrite par un aîné mohawk devant la Commission royale.

Dans notre langue, nous nous appelons les Ongwehonwe. Certains disent que ça veut dire « véritable peuple »... Cela signifie en fait que nous sommes ceux qui vivons sur cette planète aujourd'hui, en ce moment même. Nous sommes ceux qui portons sur nos épaules la responsabilité de nos nations, de notre spiritualité et de notre relation avec le Créateur. Nous devons assumer cette responsabilité aujourd'hui, à ce moment précis de l'histoire¹⁰.

Les politiques publiques et la recherche en matière de politiques ont pour but de favoriser un environnement qui permettra aux jeunes Autochtones de trouver un sens à leur vie et d'être responsables. Le principal défi de la prochaine décennie en matière de politiques publiques consistera à faire tomber les barrières

Notes

- 1 Voir l'article de Guimond et Cooke dans ce numéro d'*Horizons*.
- 2 Voir l'article de Guimond et Robitaille dans ce numéro d'*Horizons*.
- 3 Voir l'article de Chandler et Lalonde dans ce numéro d'*Horizons*. Voir aussi Chandler et Ball (1990).
- 4 Communication personnelle. Le regrette Dr. Brant était le frère de l'auteur.
- 5 Propos de Sherry Lawson, tels que cités dans le rapport de la CRPA (1996).
- 6 Propos de D'Arcy tels que cités dans DeGagné (2002: 84).
- 7 Voir le rapport de la CRPA, volume 3, qui cite le *Programme de santé mentale destiné aux Premières nations et aux Inuit* (Santé et Bien-être social Canada, 1991). À *Comprehensive Culturally Appropriate Mental Wellness Framework* préparé par le Comité consultatif sur le mieux-être mental des membres des Premières nations et des Inuits (CCMEM) (2001) était cité dans le *Rapport final de la Fondation autochtone de guérison : Un cheminement de guérison, volume 1. Un plan provisoire du CCMEM* (2006) était cité comme source de référence dans *De l'ombre à la lumière*. (Le Comité sénatorial permanent des affaires sociales, des sciences et de la technologie, 2006) Section 13.1.2.
- 8 Pour des exemples, voir Erasmus (2002).
- 9 Alexandre dans DeGagné (2002, p. 95-96).
- 10 Témoignage de Charlie Patton, Mohawk de la CRPA, le 6 mai 1993, dans CRPA (1997).

Pour consulter l'ensemble des références, voir la version électronique de ce numéro sur le site web du PRP à <www.recherchepolitique.gc.ca>

• Les parents continuent de jouer un rôle déterminant dans les choix des jeunes. Une amélioration de la santé, de la scolarité et de la situation économique des parents se

À la lumière d'expériences et d'études récentes, on peut reconnaître les facteurs clés d'une politique qui permettrait de renverser les tendances négatives et d'ouvrir des portes aux jeunes Autochtones.

- Dans le cadre de leur exploration des possibilités d'avenir, les jeunes apprennent à partir des modèles qu'ils entourent. L'exemple d'adultes compétents et jouant un rôle dans la gestion des affaires de la collectivité accroît l'éventail des choix positifs.
- Le fait de décrocher du secondaire, de devenir mère monoparentale avec la loi n'engendre pas des situations irréversibles. Selon les enseignements traditionnels, tout détour du chemin de la vie permet un apprentissage qui sera utile lors d'une prochaine étape du parcours de vie.
- Les jeunes atteignent un âge où ils sont plus réceptifs aux conseils, surtout s'ils proviennent de personnes plus expérimentées, mais qui ont à peu près leur âge. Selon les situations, leurs mentors peuvent être leurs amis, leurs professeurs ou des aînés, qu'ils soient Autochtones ou non.
- Étant donné la grande diversité des circonstances personnelles et des contextes de vie des collectives, offrir aux jeunes de multiples

publié dans ce numéro d'*Horizons*, si la scolarité, la santé, et le revenu présentent des améliorations, les écarts entre les jeunes Autochtones et les autres Canadiens en ce qui a trait à la qualité de vie demeurent importants. Le fossé s'élargit également sur le plan du revenu et les

femmes autochtones ont un meilleur rendement scolaire que les hommes. Pendant un moment, en 2005, les chefs des gouvernements fédéral, provinciaux et territoriaux et ceux des organisations autochtones nationales se sont réunis à Kelowna avec l'objectif commun de combler l'écart en termes de qualité de vie entre les citoyens autochtones et les autres Canadiens. Cette volonté de travailler ensemble semble avoir disparu. Certaines provinces, comme la Saskatchewan, la Colombie-Britannique et l'Ontario ont mis de l'avant des initiatives visant à reconnaître la présence des peuples autochtones dans le curriculum scolaire et au sein des établissements scolaires provinciaux. Le gouvernement fédéral doit faire de même s'il veut répondre aux préoccupations entourant la décharge de responsabilités vers les collectivités et l'érosion des droits issus de traités. D'ici là, les programmes fragmentés à court terme et comportant des exigences de rapport à de multiples organismes continueront d'alourdir la gestion administrative dans les collectivités.

À la lumière d'expériences et d'études récentes, on peut reconnaître les facteurs clés d'une politique qui permettrait de renverser les tendances

considérées dans le cadre plus large des questions d'éducation, de justice, de santé et de développement économique et les jeunes doivent participer activement à trouver des solutions. Le rapport recommande par ailleurs de confier la mise en œuvre des programmes aux décideurs locaux qui sont les mieux placés pour concilier les différentes cultures et réalités sociales. Les débats entourant les questions de compétence sont un obstacle important à la mise en œuvre d'interventions soutenues et coordonnées auprès des jeunes. Une des recommandations principales du rapport est le développement d'un cadre de politique pancanadien permettant d'orienter les actions des organismes fédéraux, provinciaux, territoriaux et autochtones dans leur champ d'intervention respectif et de fournir un cadre pour l'évaluation périodique de ces programmes.

À certains égards, la situation des Autochtones s'est améliorée au cours des dix dernières années⁸. La population autochtone est aujourd'hui plus scolarisée et plus de 20 000 étudiants s'inscrivent à des cours de niveau postsecondaire chaque année. Des entrepreneurs, des artistes et des écrivains autochtones s'affirment davantage au sein de leur collectivité. La Fondation autochtone de guérison a démontré qu'il est possible de soutenir les initiatives locales visant à guérir le traumatisme des pensionnats indiens dans plusieurs collectivités du pays tout en maintenant l'obligation de rendre des comptes sur le plan financier (DeGagné, 2006). Enfin, divers programmes visant à soutenir le mentorat auprès des jeunes ont vu le jour dans les centres culturels et dans les villes.

En dépit de ce portrait encourageant, plusieurs tendances sont inquiétantes. Selon l'article de Guimond et Cooke,

sur le chemin permet d'accéder à la vieillesse et à la sagesse, avant de retourner au monde spirituel. La figure 2 présente le symbole du chemin de vie de la nation Anishnabe. Il existe une solide base de connaissances permettant d'appuyer l'élaboration d'une politique de soutien au développement identitaire et au pouvoir d'agir des jeunes Autochtones. Nous disposons notamment de revues de littérature, d'analyses et d'études de cas assorties de recommandations pour les décideurs, par exemple : le rapport de la CRPA (1996), le rapport du Comité sénatorial permanent portant sur les jeunes Autochtones vivant en milieu urbain (2003) et celui sur la santé mentale (2006), le Plan directeur de la santé des Autochtones préparé en vue de la réunion des premiers ministres tenue à Kelowna (2005), les recommandations du Comité consultatif sur la santé mentale des Premières nations et des Inuits (2006)⁷ et le rapport final de la Fondation autochtone de guérison (2006).

Le 10^e anniversaire de la publication du rapport de la CRPA est maintenant derrière nous. Depuis, les études viennent confirmer, année après année, les principales conclusions du rapport et mettent en lumière le progrès limité et inégal réalisé dans la réduction des iniquités sociales et l'accroissement des occasions en faveur des jeunes. Le rapport souligne entre autres la contribution des sports et loisirs au développement du leadership et de l'éthique du service à la communauté. Les auteurs recommandent aussi des programmes d'échanges entre les collectivités et entre jeunes Autochtones et non Autochtones afin de briser l'isolement et de faire tomber les barrières à la communication. Toujours selon les auteurs, les enjeux touchant la jeunesse doivent être

cœur des préoccupations des jeunes. Le pouvoir d'agir peut être défini comme l'acquisition progressive de connaissances et la capacité de les mettre en œuvre pour le bien de la collectivité. « L'influence », le pouvoir de faire bouger les choses, est peut-être un terme plus approprié pour décrire ce processus puisqu'il n'implique pas l'abdication de l'autorité sans égard à la capacité du receveur d'en faire bon usage. Par le passé, les pratiques traditionnelles de socialisation des jeunes canalisaient leur penchant pour le risque à travers des activités comme la chasse, la formation de groupes d'attaque ou de sociétés de pairs qui marquaient, à la manière de rites, leur passage à la vie adulte. Encore aujourd'hui, les aînés demeurent les principaux Gardiens de la sagesse alors que les applications pratiques des connaissances culturelles sont apprises en observant des adultes compétents, des personnes qui, pour employer l'expression du psychologue Erik Erikson, [traduction] « savent des choses et savent comment faire les choses (1968, p. 125) ».

Le chemin de la vie est un autre enseignement fondamental dans plusieurs traditions. Allant d'est en ouest, il est composé d'intersections et d'embranchements qui se terminent en cul-de-sac. Selon la tradition, savoir rester

nellement et dans leurs gestes leur propre compréhension du monde. Les données démontrent qu'une grande proportion, peut-être 50 %, des jeunes Autochtones quittent l'école secondaire sans diplôme et adoptent souvent des comportements à risque élevé. Beaucoup de ces décrocheurs, généralement des garçons, deviennent des adultes sous-employés et marginalisés. Ceux qui reprennent le chemin de l'école dans la vingtaine témoignent de l'importance de renforcer le développement identitaire autochtone au sein des écoles secondaires et de rendre plus accessibles les portes d'entrée ou de retour aux études lorsque les jeunes y sont prêts.

Les approches favorisant le pouvoir d'agir

Au cœur de nombreuses traditions des Premières nations réside un principe pédagogique fondamental : la connaissance n'est pas acquise d'avance, elle se mérite. En pratique, cela signifie que les enseignements reçus à un niveau donné doivent être mis en pratique et l'apprenant doit démontrer qu'il peut faire une utilisation responsable de cet enseignement avant de progresser au niveau suivant. Le rapport de la CRPA le souligne, la question du pouvoir d'agir est au

FIGURE 2
Chemin de la vie de la nation Anishnabe



encore dans les collectivités très unies et engendrent une série de réponses plus ou moins fonctionnelles. Ces réponses, qui se gravent dans la mémoire collective et sont transmises par l'histoire orale, influencent les attitudes et les comportements des générations suivantes. Lorsque les chocs se succèdent sans que des intermédiaires permettent une certaine guérison, la souffrance et les situations dysfonctionnelles s'accumulent, si bien qu'il devient difficile d'établir les véritables fondements des problèmes et de leurs impacts. Comme l'ont démontré à plusieurs reprises les initiatives communautaires visant à réparer le tort causé par les services subis dans des pensionnats indiens, la remémoration collective constitue la première étape visant à remettre en perspective le traumatisme historique et à définir une approche tournée vers l'avenir (Fondation autochtone de guérison, 2006). Dans le cadre d'un cours sur les approches comparées en développement international, un étudiant inuit de l'Université Trent a été profondément touché d'apprendre l'histoire et les conditions socioéconomiques difficiles des peuples autochtones du monde entier. Il a affirmé au chargé de cours : « Les jeunes de mon village

Nous étudions les grands écrivains anglais comme Shakespeare, Spencer et Chaucer et les autres. Je me suis dit que c'était un peu étrange parce que... une fois entre

autochtones de ne pas insister suffisamment sur l'importance de la participation et de la réussite scolaire. Dans les faits, la recherche démontre que les parents perçoivent l'éducation comme essentielle à la réussite professionnelle de leurs enfants. Cela dit, en raison de leur faible niveau de scolarité, certains parents disposent d'un nombre limité d'outils pour assurer la réussite scolaire de leurs enfants. À l'occasion d'un témoignage devant la CRPA, une jeune femme s'est souvenue de son premier jour d'école. Elle attendait nerveusement l'autobus sur le bord de la route, ses cheveux tressés retenus par des rubans rouges. Sa mère, tentant de la rassurer, lui avait dit : « Voilà l'autobus. Tout va bien se passer, Sherry Lynn. N'oublie surtout pas : essaye de faire comme eux⁵. »

fondements des problèmes et de leurs impacts.

s'accumulent, si bien qu'il devient difficile d'établir les véritables
une certaine guérison, la souffrance et les situations dysfonctionnelles
Lorsque les chocs se succèdent sans que des intermédiaires permettent

devraient connaître eux aussi ces réalités. Ils pensent qu'ils sont responsables des difficultés qu'ils vivent » (Tookoomé, 1989).

L'apprentissage assisté

Les jeunes accusent assez facilement leurs parents de les avoir laissés tomber. On reproche souvent aux parents

Les enfants et les jeunes à qui l'on dit de manière implicite et explicite que les connaissances acquises dans le cadre de leur éducation ne sont d'aucune valeur en viennent à douter de leur capacité et des connaissances acquises des personnes qui ont pourvu à leurs besoins. Ils peuvent être amenés à interrompre leur cheminement scolaire jusqu'à ce qu'ils aient accompli certaines tâches développementales. Si les programmes d'éducation aux adultes offerts dans une phase plus avancée de leurs études sont particulièrement attrayants et efficaces, c'est justement parce qu'ils reconnaissent les expériences de vie et s'en servent pour explorer de nouveaux horizons.

Les formateurs autochtones Lorna Williams (2000) et Bill Mussell (2005) affirment que le fossé qui sépare l'apprentissage fondé sur les expériences de vie et celui basé sur l'apprentissage scolaire, qui engendre l'échec et mine la confiance en soi, n'a pas sa raison d'être. Selon l'approche de l'apprentissage assisté, les interventions fondées sur la recherche peuvent aider les jeunes à trouver les bons outils leur permettant de mieux saisir les milieux complexes dans lesquels ils évoluent tout comme ils le font par l'entremise de leurs parents, qui interprètent et transmettent verbalement, émotion-

dans la salle de cours, lorsque j'ai aperçu le professeur, je savais déjà ce dont il allait parler. Mon esprit s'est alors plongé à l'époque médiévale et la salle semblait soudainement transformée... C'était excitant.

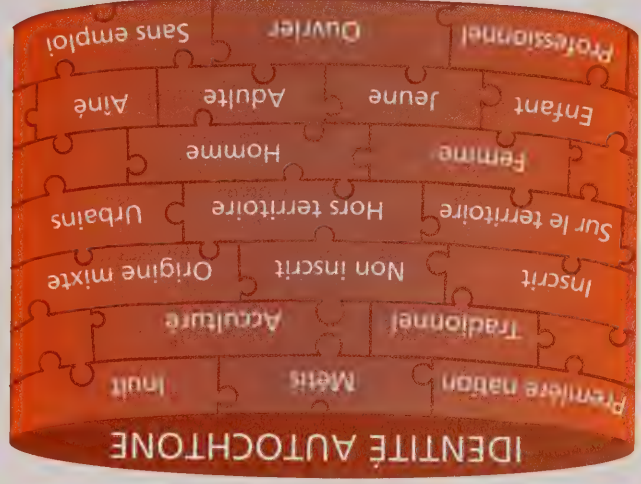
Évoluer dans un monde imaginaire peut présenter des vertus pédagogiques. Cependant, sans la présence de liens entre ce monde imaginaire et le monde réel, le processus d'apprentissage et la partie du soi qui y est engagée risquent de se séparer de l'ensemble.

Les missions de l'adolescence

Les travaux novateurs de Michael Chandler et Christopher Lalonde³ sur le suicide chez les jeunes des Premières nations nous ont rappelé avec justesse que ce sont, somme toute, qui traversent une période trouble marquée par une série de questionnements identitaires auxquels ils tentent de trouver des réponses : qui suis-je? qui je veux devenir? quelle partie de moi je veux garder et quelle partie je veux redéfinir?

Pour définir qui ils sont vraiment, ils doivent explorer une multitude d'identités, s'approprier le monde à leur façon, et tenter des expériences que leurs parents ne pourraient même pas concevoir. Cela dit, ces expériences de vie ne naissent pas et ne se déroulent dans un vide social et émotionnel. Si leurs parents leur ont transmis des connaissances et des habiletés, ils cherchent aussi des modèles parmi leurs pairs, acquièrent des compétences et des diplômes à l'école et, en cas d'échec, les plus

FIGURE
Complexités de l'identité autochtone



chanceux peuvent retourner chez eux et reprendre des forces pour mieux tenter de nouvelles expériences. Plusieurs jeunes Autochtones n'ont pas accès à certaines ou à l'ensemble de ces formes de soutien. Comme les occasions d'emploi se sont progressivement éloignées de leur lieu d'origine et de leur cellule familiale, les jeunes hommes ne peuvent plus bénéficier de la longue relation d'apprentissage transmettant la base des compétences personnelles et économiques. Le rôle des femmes, quant à lui, a moins changé, mais on incite autant les garçons que les filles à poursuivre leurs études afin de bien se préparer aux responsabilités de l'âge adulte. En plus d'évoluer dans un contexte de changement social qui rend plus flous les marqueurs identitaires de la personne adulte, les jeunes doivent composer avec les stéréotypes, de faibles attentes et des cas de racisme dans leurs interactions avec les non-Autochtones. La diversité croissante au sein des collectivités autochtones rend plus

complexes le développement et l'affirmation de l'identité, tel qu'illustré à la figure 1. Le jeune Indien aux cheveux blonds fera peut-être l'objet d'intimidation de la part de ses camarades de classe parce qu'il n'a pas l'air suffisamment indien pour faire partie du groupe. La jeune Métisse issue d'une famille qui affirme depuis peu ses origines risque quant à elle de se sentir à la fois soulagée et anxieuse à l'idée de voir son histoire personnelle redéfinie. Enfin, le jeune Autochtone urbain qui pratique l'abstinence selon la coutume, sera sans doute la risée de ses anciens amis.

Le traumatisme historique

En plus d'être confrontés à une expérience de vie cahoteuse, les jeunes Autochtones doivent combler l'écart qui existe depuis longtemps entre leur peuple et la société dominante qui les entoure. Le docteur Clare Brant, premier psychiatre d'origine autochtone au Canada, a connu beaucoup de succès dans son travail auprès des jeunes hommes frustrés, aliénés et aux comportements autodestructeurs qui lui étaient référés par les tribunaux. Il faisait remarquer que, dans le cadre de son travail, les premières paroles des jeunes hommes à son endroit ressemblaient à ceci : « Vous avez tué nos bisons et volé nos terres. Je ne veux pas de votre aide! » Le psychiatre réussissait, par sa réponse, à réorienter le dialogue de manière plus constructive.

En écoutant cette histoire, je me suis demandé comment de jeunes délinquants des quartiers durs de London en Ontario pouvaient se préoccuper de la perte de territoires survenus plusieurs générations avant leur naissance. La recherche financée par la Fondation autochtone de guérison a mis en lumière les mécanismes de transmission intergénérationnelle

Réflexions sur l'identité et le pouvoir d'agir Des thèmes récurrents dans la discussion sur et avec la jeunesse autochtone

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Lorsqu'on m'a approchée pour participer à ce numéro spécial d'*Horizons*, on m'a demandé d'aborder les enjeux de la jeunesse autochtone dans une perspective intergénérationnelle. J'ai profité de cette occasion pour réfléchir sur 50 ans d'expérience avec les enfants et les jeunes comme travailleurs sociaux dans le secteur des services à la famille et aux enfants, comme mère, grand-mère, participante à la vie communautaire des Premières nations, professeure d'université, directrice de la recherche pour la Commission royale sur les peuples autochtones (CRA) et, plus récemment, comme conseillère et journaliste s'intéressant aux questions d'éthique de la recherche et au processus de guérison des anciens élèves des pensionnats indiens. Si mon propos ne s'appuie pas forcément sur les plus récentes recherches en la matière, il s'inspire d'une grande variété de sources d'apprentissage.

Ma première publication avait pour titre : « Vocation or Identity: The Dilemma of Indian Youth ». C'était en 1970. Plus de 30 ans plus tard, on me demandait d'évaluer les thèses d'étudiants autochtones au doctorat abordant le même thème et ayant pour titre : « Participation without Integration » (DeCagne, 2002) et « Aboriginal Identity in Urban Areas » (Restoule, 2004).

Les jeunes qui participent à ces études qualitatives d'envergne restreinte par-tagent des expériences révélatrices de tendances plus profondes. À propos de leur expérience à l'école secondaire, ils soulèvent notamment leurs difficultés à définir et à affirmer leur identité, décrivent un environnement et un programme scolaires qui leur semblent étrangers, et partagent leur inconfort à l'idée « d'abandonner » des amis et camarades de classe s'ils progressent plus rapidement qu'eux. De nombreux participants ressentent l'urgence

de prendre le contrôle de leur vie, même s'ils doivent pour cela partir à l'aventure, leur sac sur le dos. À plus grande échelle, ces sentiments et les choix qui en découlent se reflètent dans les statistiques – la moitié des Indiens inscrits âgés de 20 à 24 ans quittent l'école secondaire avant l'obtention d'un diplôme¹. Les données révèlent que les jeunes Autochtones de sexe masculin sont beaucoup plus susceptibles d'être incarcérés ou de se suicider que les autres jeunes du pays, et que les grossesses adolescentes sont six fois plus répandues parmi les Indiennes inscrites que dans la population en général². Bien que ces données traduisent la réalité de la population indienne inscrite, d'autres indicateurs du bien-être révèlent des disparités importantes et persistantes entre les conditions de vie des Métis et des Inuits et celles des autres Canadiens. Dans le cadre de ces études, les jeunes ont affirmé vivre pleinement leur identité autochtone. Ces jeunes traversent ou ont traversé leur adolescence avec les risques qui l'accompagnent. Si quelques participants sont issus de milieux stables sur le plan affectif et économique, la plupart d'entre eux rencontrent les mêmes défis que leurs camarades moins scolarisés et qui ont plus de difficulté à s'exprimer : familles fragmentées, pères absents, faible revenu, démenagement fréquents, expériences personnelles d'abus d'alcool et épisodes de décrochage scolaire depuis le milieu de leur adolescence. Leur histoire, et celle de la jeunesse autochtone que j'ai côtoyée au fil des ans, fait ressortir avec éclat la résilience dont ils font preuve de même que les sources de cette résilience. La recherche en matière de politiques et les stratégies d'intervention doivent s'attaquer de front à ces problèmes et non se contenter de mieux les décrire.

Tout au long de ce projet, nous avons constaté les limites auxquelles sont confrontés les chercheurs, à savoir le manque de données et d'information. Bien qu'il faille tenir compte de nombreux facteurs (contraintes politiques ou liées à la faisabilité, à la capacité

encore les liens entre pauvreté et état de santé. Nous savons également, comme l'a souligné Brant Castellano, qu'il existe de nombreuses initiatives dont nous n'avons pas encore tiré profit : des initiatives réalisées partout au pays par et pour des jeunes

Il existe de nombreuses initiatives dont nous n'avons pas encore tiré profit : des initiatives réalisées partout au pays par et pour des jeunes Autochtones, qui portent des fruits et ont une influence positive.

financière ou à la compétence) lors des discussions concernant les politiques, il est essentiel de construire une base de connaissances sur les questions autochtones solide, multidimensionnelle et pertinente sur le plan stratégique.

Nous nous en voudrions de ne pas admettre dès le départ que ce numéro ne fait qu'effleurer la surface. Nous nous sommes penchés sur un vaste éventail de sujets, mais de nombreux autres sujets n'ont pas été examinés. Ainsi, nous n'avons pas été en mesure de creuser les nombreuses et importantes recherches et questions stratégiques relatives à l'utilisation des services de bien-être à l'enfance et à la jeunesse autochtones; ou l'incidence et le coût socioéconomiques de l'ensemble des troubles causés par l'alcoolisation fœtale sur les individus, les familles et les collectivités; ou

Autochtones, qui portent des fruits et ont une influence positive. De toute évidence, si nous voulons élaborer des politiques et des programmes qui apportent des solutions adéquates aux problèmes qui nuisent au bien-être des jeunes Autochtones, ces lacunes dans nos connaissances devront être comblées grâce à des recherches plus poussées. Évidemment, bien qu'ALNC joue un rôle de leader lorsqu'il s'agit de combler les lacunes en matière de recherche sur les politiques destinées aux Autochtones, le Ministère ne travaille pas dans l'isolement. Plus d'une vingtaine d'autres ministères et organismes fédéraux, de même que des groupes de recherche universitaires et des organisations autochtones, œuvrent à l'acquisition de connaissances sur les questions autochtones. Il est essentiel d'établir

des liens entre ces différentes activités de recherche sur une base horizontale, et tant ALNC que PRP sont prêts à travailler en collaboration à cet objectif. Pour résumer, nous savons que le chemin que prendra la jeunesse autochtone dans les années à venir aura une grande importance pour l'avenir du Canada en ce qui a trait au bien-être de ses citoyens, à sa cohésion sociale et à sa prospérité économique. En tant que responsables de l'élaboration des politiques, nous assumons entièrement la responsabilité qui nous incombe de nous servir des leviers à notre disposition pour veiller à ce que les jeunes Autochtones au Canada aient les perspectives d'avenir, les habiletés et les outils dont ils ont besoin pour tracer leur propre voie. Nous devons leur permettre de continuer à redéfinir et réaffirmer la place des peuples autochtones au cœur du projet canadien. Nous sommes conscients que ne pas le faire serait condamner une autre génération de jeunes Autochtones à vivre en marge de notre société. Enfin, nous savons également que pour atteindre cet objectif, nous, au gouvernement, devons faire nos devoirs, c'est-à-dire investir dans la recherche de pointe de la plus haute qualité. Les jeunes Autochtones ne méritent pas moins.

estime qu'en 2026, au moins 36 % de la population âgée de 15 à 29 ans sera Autochtone.

Nous savons que les conditions socioéconomiques des Autochtones se sont considérablement améliorées au cours des 20 dernières années. Comme le soulignent Guimond et Cooke dans leur article, on a constaté au sein de la population des Indiens inscrits des progrès dans leur niveau de scolarisation, leur espérance de vie et leur niveau de vie. Dans son article, Hull renchérit que les élèves autochtones sont de plus en plus nombreux à faire des études postsecondaires, tandis que les articles de Norris, Coley et Tulloch laissent entendre que les jeunes Autochtones semblent de plus en plus s'affirmer comme les futurs intendants de leurs collectivités et cultures au XXI^e siècle. Il s'agit là de progrès importants qui doivent être célébrés.

Toutefois, en dépit de ces améliorations, il y a encore de trop nombreux jeunes Autochtones – en particulier chez les Indiens inscrits et les Inuits – qui accusent un retard par rapport aux autres jeunes Canadiens en ce qui a trait à la réussite des études secondaires, à la santé mentale et physique, ainsi qu'aux perspectives d'emploi. Ainsi, dans son article, Clement montre comment, pour ce qui est de l'obtention de diplômes universitaires, l'écart entre les Indiens inscrits et les autres Canadiens s'accroît au lieu de diminuer. Dans leur article, Guimond et Robitaille font état de taux inacceptables de grossesse chez les adolescentes. En outre, comme en témoigne Norris, de nombreux



peuples autochtones assistent en ce moment à l'extinction de leur langue traditionnelle.

Plusieurs facteurs expliquent les difficultés observées, notamment

la transmission intergénérationnelle de la pauvreté et les obstacles géographiques à la fréquentation d'établissements postsecondaires, qui se trouvent souvent loin des collectivités autochtones. Dans leur article, Chandler et Lalonde nous rappellent toutefois que l'on ne peut considérer de manière simpliste ces situations comme étant des « problèmes autochtones » pour la très bonne raison qu'il y a d'énormes différences entre les collectivités autochtones sur le plan social. Ces différences – entre les collectivités et les groupes identitaires – comportent d'importantes leçons que les chercheurs en politiques seraient avisés de prendre en compte.

Nous savons que les jeunes Inuits et d'autres jeunes Autochtones vivant dans le Nord voient leur communauté vivre des changements culturels, environnementaux et économiques radicaux, et nous savons qu'ils veulent faire leur part pour faire en sorte que leur communauté continue de prospérer au XXI^e siècle. Nous savons également que les jeunes Métis désirent continuer de s'affirmer au sein de la société canadienne dans un contexte qui reconnaît mieux les droits et le patrimoine de leur peuple. Un nombre croissant de jeunes Autochtones se retrouveront à travailler et à élever leur famille dans une grande ville, tout en s'efforçant de maintenir ou de renouer des liens avec leur collectivité et leur culture traditionnelle. Nous pouvons affirmer avec une relative certitude qu'un nombre croissant de jeunes des Premières nations perdront leur statut d'Indien inscrit, ce qui signifie qu'ils perdront leur droit

Entre espoir et adversité La jeunesse autochtone et l'avenir du Canada

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du Nord Canada

Les jeunes Autochtones de moins de 25 ans composent plus de la moitié de la population autochtone au Canada aujourd'hui.

Cette réalité démographique prend une signification encore plus grande lorsqu'on la compare au vieillissement actuel de la population canadienne en général. Ensemble, la population en croissance rapide des jeunes Autochtones et la cohorte vieillissante des baby-boomers constituent à la fois un défi exceptionnel sur le plan des politiques, mais également une chance à saisir unique pour le Canada.

Au cours des prochaines années, tous les ordres de gouvernement seront confrontés d'apporter des ajustements nécessaires afin de fournir l'éventail approprié de services de soutien à une population vieillissante tout en visant le développement et le renouvellement d'une main-d'œuvre en croissance. Pour relever ces défis adéquatement, il sera essentiel de faire des investissements dans la jeunesse — et tout particulièrement la jeunesse autochtone.

De nouvelles générations de jeunes Autochtones auront la possibilité de participer activement à l'organisation de la société de demain. Toutefois, le contexte actuel qui permet aux jeunes de prendre le sentiment de la vie adulte (une transition qui comporte déjà divers degrés d'incertitudes et de risques) exigeant des niveaux de capital humain élevés. Cela est vrai pour tous les jeunes, mais les mauvaises conditions socioéconomiques dans lesquelles vivent de nombreux jeunes des Premières nations, Inuits et Métis constituent d'importants défis supplémentaires.

Ce numéro spécial d'*Horizons* présente de nombreuses informations sur les tendances émergentes, les perspectives

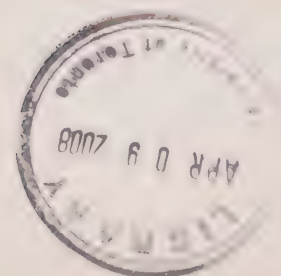
favorables et les incidences de la croissance rapide de la population des jeunes Autochtones sur les politiques. Ce numéro est l'aboutissement de plus d'un an d'étroite collaboration entre le (PRP) et Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada (AINC). Il a été conçu dans le cadre du projet de recherche inter-ministériel du PRP intitulé « Investir dans la jeunesse : leçons tirées des politiques, de la pratique et de la recherche ». Nous avons eu la chance de pouvoir y intégrer une grande variété d'études sur les politiques destinées aux Autochtones qui ont été faites par les meilleurs chercheurs, tant au sein du gouvernement qu'à l'extérieur. Nous espérons que la qualité de ce travail de recherche sera manifeste.

Les études présentées dans ce numéro viennent à point nommé, tout comme l'occasion qu'elles offrent à la communauté des chercheurs en politiques de se pencher sur des questions qui concernent la jeunesse autochtone. Au moment où, en matière de tendances démographiques, l'attention du public se concentre sur la population vieillissante des baby-boomers, le dépeuplement des régions rurales et les difficultés des nouveaux Canadiens, la croissance phénoménale de la population autochtone passe inaperçue.

Pourtant, les chiffres sont clairs. Comme le montre l'étude de Jeremy Hull, entre 2001 et 2026, plus de 600 000 jeunes Autochtones atteindront l'âge de 15 ans, dont plus de 100 000 dans chacune des provinces suivantes : la Colombie-Britannique, l'Alberta, la Saskatchewan, le Manitoba et l'Ontario. Cette croissance représente un afflux massif dans la population en âge de travailler en particulier en Saskatchewan où l'on

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ISSN 1487-7090

Horizons est publié par le Projet de

recherche sur les politiques (PRP) à

l'intention des chercheurs en politiques

du gouvernement fédéral. L'objectif premier

du PRP est d'approfondir, de rassembler

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nisme lié à l'auteur ou à Horizons.

Cette édition spéciale de *Horizons* a été produite

conjointement par le Projet de recherche sur les politiques

du gouvernement du Canada et la Direction de la recherche
et de l'analyse du ministère des Affaires indiennes et du

Nord Canada.

Sony Assu

**Lalch-kwil-tach de la bande de
Wei Wai Kai (Cape Mudge)**



Sony Assu est l'un des artistes montants les plus
prometteurs au Canada. Il associe l'esthétique

contemporaine à des formes et des dessins

traditionnels de la côte nord ouest. S'il expérimente

dans ses tableaux et sculptures avec les notions

de réification et de « tout fait », ses œuvres n'en

constituent pas moins une critique de la culture

contemporaine. « Je suis un produit de la culture

populaire. J'ai grandi à l'ère de la publicité de

masse et des annonces subliminales, [mais] nuance

l-il, je suis capable de marier mes racines pop avec

mon héritage traditionnel Lalch-kwil-tach. » Le résultat

est une rencontre avec la tradition qui refuse d'acquiescer

aux stéréotypes de l'art et des artistes des Premières nations, tout

en respectant la culture autochtone et en intégrant l'urbanité. « J'aborde la notion

de conformité sans me conformer à la perception commune que les gens ont de

l'identité indienne. »

Pour l'illustration de la page couverture, l'artiste a utilisé un tambour traditionnel
en peau de cerf comme « canvas » pour créer le rigolo *Idrum : Hotel California*.
« Les tambours ont toujours été importants dans ma vie. Ce sont les premiers
objets que j'ai appris à créer de façon traditionnelle. » La peinture illustre la
juxtaposition de cultures polarisées. La série *Idrum* parle de notre utilisation des
icônes et des objets de la culture pop comme représentation totémique. L'œuvre
dissémine les idéaux qui se cachent derrière les totems personnels et la façon
dont les icônes ou objets de la culture pop influencent notre lignage

contemporain.

A la question « Pourquoi Hotel California? », Sony a donné une réponse toute

simple : « Parce qu'il y a des aigles dessus... »

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MARS 2008

VOLUME 10 NUMÉRO 1



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A Decade of Knowledge



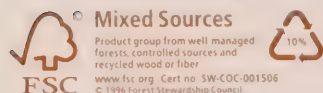
Early in the existence of PRI there was recognition of the need to have a vehicle for consolidating and disseminating policy-relevant research findings. Out of this need was born the publication known as *Horizons*. In those early days it was a bulletin containing short pieces that directed analysts to research along a thematic that could prove of interest to the policy and policy research communities. Over the last ten years, *Horizons* has become one of Canada's respected policy research publications.

While there is a significant change in distribution – from what was effectively an internal federal government print publication with a small circulation (of a couple of hundred copies), to a universally accessible, electronic, on-demand e-zine with over 10,000 downloads for an average issue – our goals have remained the same.

We endeavour to provide high-quality research material available on issues of growing policy salience. The choice of topic is often – but not always – guided by PRI's own mandated research, but issues of *Horizons* are always designed to frame policy challenges, to direct policy makers to high-quality research, to signal opportunities for researchers both within and outside the federal government to contribute to the creation of knowledge in support of policy development and to identify gaps in both theoretical and empirical analysis and in data that need to be addressed in the interests of sound, evidence-based policy making.

Many past issues of *Horizons* have remained policy-relevant over time and are referenced frequently. As an example, the issue on Population Health (volume 2, number 3) was downloaded over 1500 times last year – 9 years after its first printing.

This issue marks ten completed years of *Horizons* with 42 issues covering a broad range of public policy interest.



HORIZONS

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Dealing with Religious Diversity

Opportunities and Challenges

The popularity of the Canadian sitcom *Little Mosque on the Prairie* shows that dealing with religious diversity is one of the realities to which many ordinary Canadians can relate. A 2008 study by the Pew Global Attitudes Project finds that religion remains an essential part in the lives of individuals in most countries it surveyed. Though Canada was not one of the countries included in the Pew study, its findings nevertheless resonate here.

Even though attendance at religious services is on the decline, a majority of Canadians still identify themselves with a faith tradition. Changes in patterns of immigration are, however, changing how Canadians express their faith. The evidence presented in this issue of *Horizons* speaks to the growing religious

diversity in Canada. In particular, while mainline denominations, such as Catholic and Protestant, show a decline in the past decade, the number of adherents of other faith traditions doubled in the same period. Moreover, in recent years, issues of religious diversity have sprung up in a number of public policy areas, both in Canada and abroad.

So what does all this mean? and does it challenge the way we treat issues related to religion in developing and implementing policy?

The questions posed by religious diversity appear likely to become more salient over time. Recent changes to how governments relate to citizens – for example, the increasing use of ombudsman services – provide new ways for individuals to raise grievances with the way public policy affects them in the practice of their faith. Federal employees also have a new avenue of expression: recent changes to the *Public Service Labour Relations Act* established an informal conflict management system to address workplace tensions, including those linked to faith. Policy makers will be prompted to think about whether and how to adapt policies to meet the particular needs of Canadians from differing religious backgrounds.

This area of public policy is also inherently horizontal. A better understanding of religious differences and the role that religious identities play in the social life of the country is likely to reveal policy needs and opportunities that will prompt a broad range of departments and agencies at all orders of government to reconsider the programs and policies for which they are responsible and to identify implications for how they are staffed and managed. In addition, the development, design and implementation of particular domestic and foreign policies may suggest new approaches to responding to increasing religious diversity in other policy areas.

Mechanisms for mutual learning and horizontal policy development are still weak – partly because public servants find the subject sensitive, and because there are few fora for developing a common knowledge base or sharing effective practices.

How are the structures we have in place coping with the new pressures?

Discussions on religious diversity have often been subsumed under the broader rubrics of cultural diversity and multiculturalism. Yet in a series of roundtable consultations jointly conducted in 2007 by the Policy Research Initiative and the Multiculturalism Program (then housed in the Department of Canadian Heritage), many participants observed that religion is increasingly emerging as a topic on its own. Among the gaps identified were:

- the absence of a clear societal discourse that – at the level of *principle* – describes and guides how Canadians deal with religious diversity in their daily lives; and
- a lack of understanding of how governments and other institutions relate to religious individuals and communities *in practice* – especially in policy development and design and in service delivery.

On the whole, Canada's institutions have been able to deal quite well with issues arising from diversity. Nevertheless, it is possible that tensions may increase between the religious traditions of newcomers and traditions inherited from Europe, in which religion has been embedded in civic practice. These debates could also spill over into the discourse around First and founding nations. Yet research also shows that we have been able to change institutional practice to include the participation of people of differing faiths. While those changes can sometimes take too long, it is not clear what mechanisms are available to accelerate institutional adaptation. Our strongest asset here may be managers' openness to dialogue and willingness to invest in finding new ways of working. Formal links to faith communities can help policy makers understand the context they are working in and provide valuable counsel on options under consideration.

Drawing from research in Canada and abroad, the articles in this issue address questions such as these: What is the extent of religious diversity in Canada

and internationally? How do societies and public institutions deal with this diversity? How should public policies (and the broader societal discourse) adapt to increasing religious diversity?

A few articles in a single issue of *Horizons* can at best scratch the surface of this large and complex topic. With this in mind, the issue identifies avenues for further research. The goal is to increase interest among policy practitioners (and among researchers in both government and the external research community) in the production and dissemination of high-quality research that can inform government policies on religious diversity, including their connections to the country's multiculturalism policy framework. ☾

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Responding to Religious Diversity: A Third Element of Multiculturalism Policy

In the last two decades, Canada has experienced a growth of diversity in culture, language, and religion. However, dealing with such diversity remains a work in progress subject to the evolving social context as governments and citizens respond to issues of the day. Since the inception of Canada's multiculturalism policy over 30 years ago, discussions on cultural diversity have evolved from cultural retention in the 1970s and racial equality in the 1980s, to social inclusion in the 1990s (Fleras and Kunz, 2001). While religion is often discussed in the context of

of Canadians on multiculturalism. One key finding was the significant uncertainty among participants as to whether and how to incorporate faith and religion into the public sphere more generally and into the multicultural discourse more specifically (Kunz and Sykes, 2007).

In a recent presentation, Kymlicka (2008) observed that multiculturalism is under pressure to add religion as a "third track" along with ethnicity and race, noting in particular that "there remains much uncertainty about the role of religion within the multiculturalism policy, and about the sorts of religious organizations and faith-based claims that should be supported by the policy."

Drawing from all the contributors to this issue of *Horizons* and other sources, this article sketches a preliminary analytic framework for exploring the policy implications of religious diversity in Canada. It is premised on the notion that religious diversity is here to stay and policy responses to the issues arising out of that diversity need to succeed simultaneously at multiple levels :

- at a "micro" level, by facilitating and promoting mutual *private* accommodation among religiously diverse individuals and communities;
- at a "meso" level, by tailoring *government* programs and policies to meet the needs of a religiously diverse citizenry;
- at a "macro" level, by adopting a broad *societal* discourse that reflects and shapes ongoing public debate over the role of religion and religious diversity in public life.

Religious Diversity in a Multicultural Canada Quo Vadis?

culture, accommodating religious diversity has increasingly become a topic of its own in recent years.

A series of regional roundtables conducted by the Policy Research Initiative (PRI) in partnership with the Department of Canadian Heritage in the first half of 2007 provided a snap shot of the opinions of randomly selected groups

Finally, the article also attempts to sketch out a preliminary list of policy research gaps that may warrant further study.

Religious Diversity: A Fact of Contemporary Societies

As Thomas notes in the article on p. 14 of this issue, there are significant global shifts underway in the intensity and geographic pattern of religious faith, reflecting a resurgence in religiosity, notably among Islamic and evangelical Christian communities in many countries as well as significant population migrations between countries with different religious traditions.

In Canada, as in other Western countries, this is reflected in a growing religious diversity. Notwithstanding an overall decline in church attendance in Canada, the overwhelming majority of Canadians still identify themselves as Christian – mostly Roman Catholics and mainline Protestants, with smaller numbers of Orthodox Christians and small (though rapidly growing) numbers of “other” Christians, including evangelicals. However, in recent decades, immigration has steadily contributed to a diversification of religious faith (figure on the right), a trend that is expected to continue.

As noted in this issue, religion has sprung up in a number of areas of Canadian public policy in recent years, a trend that predates – but has acquired a significantly heightened profile since – the events of 9/11. Canada’s Muslim community in particular has frequently become the focus of public and media attention, although incidents involving Sikh, Jewish, and other faith

communities have also attracted attention. That attention has by no means all been cast in a negative or sensationalist tone (i.e. focusing on “threats” to and “conflicts” within the Canadian social fabric): “Little Mosque on the Prairie,” a Canadian sitcom broadcast on CBC, deals with the misunderstandings between Muslim and non-Muslim communities in a fictional Prairie town. Now in its third season, the show has garnered accolades in Canada and has been syndicated internationally.

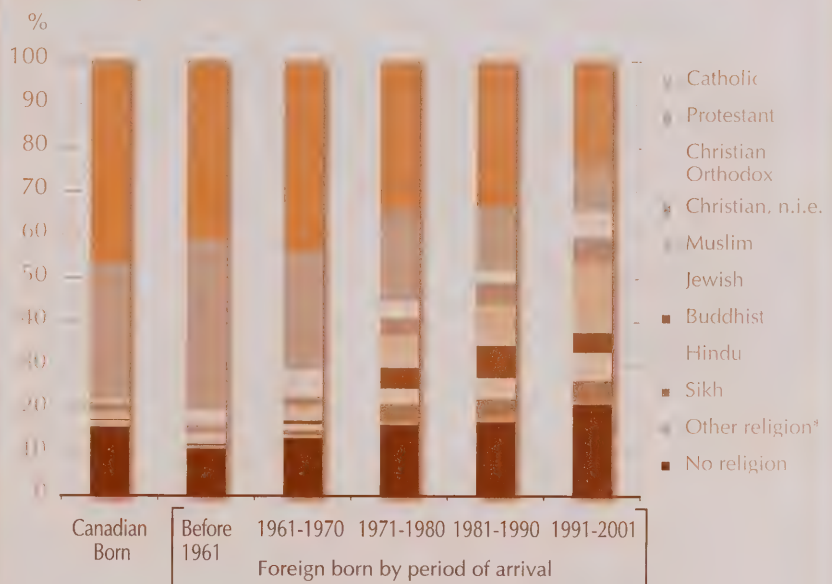
Canada is not alone in facing the challenges associated with increased religious diversity. There is growing policy interest in this area in other Western countries with similar demographic realities, as witnessed by the 2003 report by the Stasi Commission in France (Commission de réflexion sur l’application du principe de laïcité

dans la république, see p. 49) which led to the subsequent law banning religious symbols in public schools in France, the 2004 report in the United Kingdom, *Working Together: Co-operation between Government and Faith Communities*, and the 2004 Australian report (see p. 33), *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia* (see p. 39). Key recurring themes in these debates look at how both governments and citizens need to respond, and how government policies in particular should be adapted to deal with this evolving reality.

Dealing with Religious Diversity: Three Levels of Policy Analysis

Policy responses to increasing religious diversity arguably need to succeed simultaneously at three distinct levels.

Immigration Contributes to Growing Religious Diversity: Canada

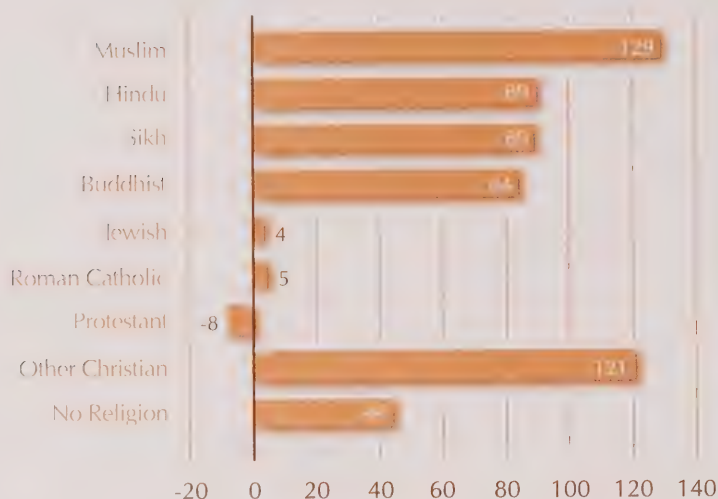


*Other religion: this category refers to individuals who expressed a belief that is not otherwise identified in this graph.

Source: Statistics Canada, *Census of Population, Beyond 20/20 Professional Browser 97F0022xCb01004.IVT*

Though still small, the number of Canadians from non-Christian religious backgrounds has grown rapidly...

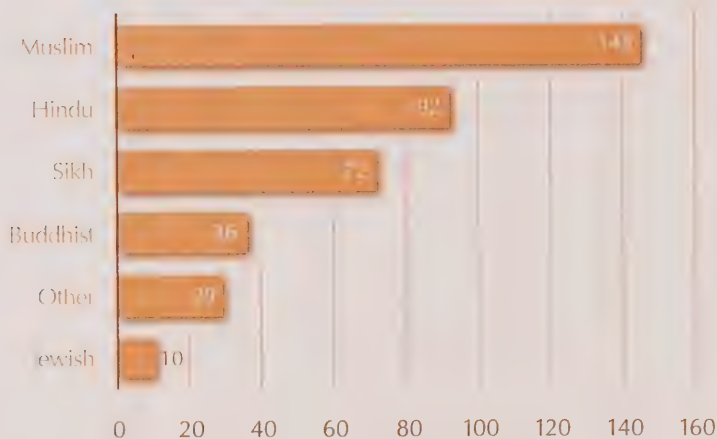
Percentage change in religious affiliation, 1991 to 2001



Source: Canadian Diversity Volume 5:2 spring 2006: *Now that religious diversity is upon us*; Kamal Dib.

...and is projected to continue to do so.

Projected percentage change in religious affiliation, 2001 to 2017



Source: Canadian Diversity Volume 5:2 spring 2006: *Now that religious diversity is upon us*; Kamal Dib.

At what could be considered the “micro” level, private individuals and organizations generally try (and mostly succeed) in working out their differences through various strategies of mutual accommodation, with the help of public policy interventions that, in a cohesive society, are modest in scale or arise only occasionally.

At a “meso” level, governments of all orders need to develop and deliver public policies, programs, and services to citizens, both religious and non-religious, generally adapting them to their different needs, subject only to the need to respect certain core values set out in the country’s constitution and other foundational documents.

Finally, at a “macro” level, diverse societies generally need to be able to tell a coherent and compelling story about how they treat all citizens justly and with respect, but also to acknowledge and explain the trade-offs that may sometimes be necessary between respect for diversity, on the one hand, and other core values of the broader society.

Getting Along: The “Micro” Level

In cohesive societies, differences and the tensions they sometimes generate are, for the most part, worked out privately between individuals or sometimes through spokespersons for individual communities intervening with private organizations. Differences may also be resolved through voluntary actions by different communities to accommodate the particular needs of others and, more generally, to engage in ecumenical outreach to other faith communities. Occasionally, tensions may

be avoided through forms of (typically limited) self-segregation on the part of religious communities themselves.

Given the significant place religious faith often occupies in the identities of Canadians, private accommodation of religious differences may make a particularly important contribution to social cohesion. On the whole, Canadians appear to be well intentioned in this regard, viewing cultural and, by implication, religious diversity as a source of strength of their society.

For example, as revealed in an Environics survey of Muslim and non-Muslim Canadians (summarized in the article by Adams in this issue), a general level of good will between the two groups undoubtedly goes a long way in enabling individuals and communities to resolve their differences privately through mutual accommodation in real life, just as in fictional episodes of "Little Mosque on the Prairie."

As Adams also points out, some areas of concern and misunderstanding remain between Muslim Canadians and non-Muslim Canadians, notably concerns that Muslim Canadians (most of them immigrants) are not committed to integration with broader society – notwithstanding the strong interest and commitment among Muslim Canadians to do just that.

This misapprehension testifies to a broader challenge: the evident unease felt by many Canadians in relation to whether and how to accommodate the needs of their fellow citizens from minority religious backgrounds. This may often be a reflection of lack of familiarity and information, the absence of which, in turn, reflects the

natural tendency for adherents of different religious faiths to congregate with others of that faith. Efforts at public education or at facilitating dialogue across different faiths (as suggested in the article by Seljak in this issue) may thus have some value as policy prescriptions for reducing the scope for misunderstandings.

More challenging to policy makers are the infrequent episodes involving situations where usually effective private efforts at accommodations fail to prevent the emergence of public controversies. Public mediation and facilitation efforts may sometimes be effective, especially when conflicts remain low-key. Such efforts may also fail, giving rise to demands for various forms of adjudication, whether through government (e.g. ranging from muni-

cipal decisions on zoning to changes to human rights legislation) or through the courts (see figure below).

More challenging to policy makers are the infrequent episodes involving situations where usually effective private efforts at accommodations fail to prevent the emergence of public controversies.

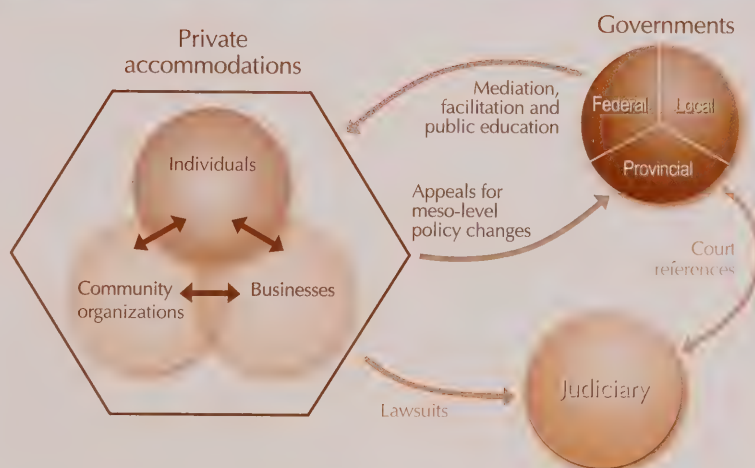
Serving Canadians: The "Meso" Level

The highly competitive nature of political dynamics in democratic societies generally translates into governments (and political parties in general) seeking to address the particular needs of a wide variety of citizens by bringing them or spokespersons for the communities to which they belong into the decision-making

process and through resulting adaptations of their policies and programs.

In most cases, both the decision-making process and the resulting policies and programs seem to raise few, if any, controversies. Several articles in this issue describe recent initiatives and

The Dynamics of Micro-level Accommodation



present case studies of (largely) successful – though ongoing – efforts to adapt government policies to increasing religious diversity. Milot and Tremblay’s article describes adaptations to Quebec’s school system and Benham Rennick’s article describes adaptations to growing religious diversity in the Canadian military. Based on interviews with a number of federal departments, the article by Gaye and Kunz also describes a range of other cases where federal policies were adapted in the face of growing religious diversity. In a somewhat different vein, the second article by Thomas sketches out some of the key challenges posed by increasing religious diversity on a global scale for the conduct of foreign policy by Canada and other countries (see Thomas on p. 50).

While numerous examples of successful policy adaptations can be found, many seem to be more the product of a “muddling through” approach, that is, dealing with each situation on a more or less ad hoc, case-by-case basis. It is by no means clear that a more systematic approach for determining what adjustments to make is either feasible or desirable. In their article, Gaye and Kunz report a general scepticism among policy practitioners toward the merits of a systematic approach, given changing social and demographic realities as well as the specific nature of many situations that may warrant

policy adaptations. Many of the policy practitioners they interviewed felt the country’s broad constitutional and legislative framework (including multiculturalism policies of more general application already in place) set the

tone for flexible policy adaptations that would be more difficult to make if made subject to rigid, high-level directives.

Even though the goal of an overarching, principle-based approach to adapting policies to religious diversity may be beyond reach, policy makers may still be able to draw useful lessons from recent patterns of both successful and unsuccessful attempts to adapt policies geared to

the interests of faith communities. For example:

- As a general rule, policy adaptations in areas not involving the exercise of state authority over Canadians appear likely to raise the fewest objections: e.g., consultations with religious community stakeholders, most services offered to all Canadians on a more or less equivalent basis (or at least on a basis that is seen as equally flexible for all) and even foreign policies.
- Policy adaptations that may appear to involve “exemptions” from legislative, regulatory, or other obligations imposed on Canadians generally can be expected to be significantly more controversial, particularly if they are

seen to involve changes to statutory obligations. The debate on proposals in Ontario to allow recourse to Sharia law and other alternative legal codes under family law arbitrations is one recent example.

- Especially controversial (though sometimes hard to identify in advance) are adaptations that in some way are seen by significant numbers as running counter to their core values or undermining historically significant national symbols. A recent example is the Quebec National Assembly’s decision not to remove the crucifix from its chamber, thereby rejecting one recommendation of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission. Another example was the resistance in Ontario to proposals to facilitate access to public funding for faith-based schools, notwithstanding existing confessional education rights in the Constitution.

Setting the Tone: The “Macro” Level

Notwithstanding the likelihood that it will be difficult (if not impossible) to set out a single analytical framework for assessing the need for and designing policy adaptations relating to Canada’s diverse religious communities, the country is still likely to want (and need) to present a coherent overall discourse, grounded in principles, to describe and guide its overall approach.

In his article in this issue, Cladis notes that the acknowledgment accorded to faith-based discourse in the public space can and does vary from one society to another – and even across

those that view themselves as impeccably liberal democracies. The key question addressed in his article is that of “how to accommodate and respect – but not privilege – religious diversity in public space and in political deliberation.”

Drawing on Cladis’ four archetypal models of the role of religious discourse in the public space, one can think in terms of a historical typology of societies, ranging from faith-based societies consisting of a single dominant faith, to those that (even though they may be religiously diverse) are faith-guided (in the sense that religious discourse is a common and recurring theme in public debate), to those that are actively faith-averse and to those that are faith-neutral.

While no living society is ever likely to fall neatly into one or the other of these archetypes, Canada throughout its history appears especially hard to classify in these terms. The preamble to the *Constitution Act, 1982* acknowledges that “Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law.” The *Constitution Act, 1867* also entrenches confessional school rights. References to God exist in both English and French-language versions of the national anthem. At the same time, freedom of conscience and religion is one of the fundamental rights guaranteed by paragraph 2(a) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

The coexistence – even within the country’s foundational texts – of both the religious legacies of its historical past and its commitment to freedom of

religion marks Canada as somewhat distinct, as does the fact (noted in the article by Therrien) that Canada is one of the few Western countries that has never had either a formal state religion nor a formal commitment to state secularism.

In form, and increasingly in everyday practice, Canada appears to most closely approximate a faith-neutral society that is generally welcoming of its religious diversity but seeks to be neutral as between the different faiths (or absence of faith) of its citizens – a vision described (in Therrien’s article, describing the particular context in Quebec) as one of “laicity” (“*laïcité*”) to distinguish it explicitly from the more forceful doctrine of secularism (“*laïcisme*”) adopted in France and some other countries. Another model of faith-neutral society could be found in India, as described by Bhargava in this issue.

However, even a largely faith-neutral society may find itself having to decide on and enforce some kind of reasonable limits on religious practices (or, more typically, traditional customs that may be hard to disentangle from religious beliefs), notably where such practices may conflict with other core values of the broader society and require appropriate trade-offs. As such, no societal

discourse on living with religious diversity can ever be properly viewed as absolute. This is particularly true given that such a discourse is continually evolving in the face of changing mores and the patterns of successes and failures in adapting to the changing pattern of that diversity.

No societal discourse on living with religious diversity can ever be properly viewed as absolute. This is particularly true given that such a discourse is continually evolving in the face of changing mores and the patterns of successes and failures in adapting to the changing patterns of that diversity.

Policy Research Gaps

As suggested by other articles in this issue, religious diversity appears to be here to stay and will inevitably have implications for the development and design of public policies. Yet in many ways, this area is unexplored terrain for many (if not most) policy makers. Federal policy makers have only begun to explore these issues: the article by research staff at the Multiculturalism branch now based within the department of Citizenship and Immigration, in this issue, summarizes

recent research commissioned by the federal government, notably on religious radicalization, the interaction of religious Canadians with an increasingly secular society, the role of social capital within religious communities, and the particular challenges facing Muslim integration into Canadian society. Nevertheless, sizeable gaps in knowledge and understanding of key issues (and even in basic data) remain.

Nature and Fluidity of Religious Identities

Religious belief (or lack thereof) is often a key aspect of many individual identities. As demonstrated by Bowlby (2001), religious identity often overlaps with other identity markers such as gender, race, or language and with other individual attributes that may affect their social and economic outcomes in ways that are still poorly understood.

Further, unlike gender and race, religious identity is relatively fluid: the nature and intensity of religious beliefs and affiliations of individuals can and do change over the course of their lives and from one generation to the next. It is not clear to what extent this holds for immigrants from countries with very different religious traditions, for whom immersion in the traditions of Canadian society may pose particular challenges. Nor is it well understood how religious identities evolve between the first, second, and subsequent generations of immigrants.

Religious Affiliation as Social Capital

It is common enough for immigrant populations (including those from minority faith traditions) to congregate in regionally concentrated areas – at least for a time – to profit from ready-made social networks (“bonding” social capital) that can serve as a

base from which to extend social networks into the broader society (“bridging” social capital).

While such self-segregation occasionally raises concerns, it remains unclear

Knowledge gaps exist in relation to the diagnosis of precisely what those challenges are, but also in relation to the effectiveness of available policy instruments in addressing them.

when and how to distinguish the generally positive phenomenon just described from situations where systemic and other barriers may impede the full participation of religious minorities in the Canadian mainstream. For example, some studies (e.g. Beyer, 2005) have suggested that individuals of certain religious convictions may be

more vulnerable to low income in spite of their higher education levels. That said, it remains unclear to what extent this phenomenon is related to religious affiliation or to some other factor (e.g. immigrant status/period of time spent in Canada, language skills, etc.).

In a somewhat different vein, it is not always clear what may constitute indicators of potential conflict with broader societal values in cases where particular religious communities explicitly choose to live apart from the broader society and to avoid a (broader or narrower) range of relationships with it.

Policy Instruments and Governance

Governments are increasingly asked (and/or ask themselves) whether and how to deal with the challenges of a more religiously diverse society. Knowledge gaps exist in relation to the

diagnosis of precisely what those challenges are (as noted above), but also in relation to the effectiveness of available policy instruments in addressing them.

For example, to the extent that improved public information efforts (e.g. to foster acceptance of diversity of religious practice and public displays of religious symbols) are viewed as a potentially important part of future policy responses in this area, it remains unclear how broadly responsive Canadians are to such efforts, what systematic differences there may be in this regard across different regions, age or socio-demographic groups, and how robust these differences may be.

The often delicate issue of what kinds of public policy or program adaptations can and should be made could also benefit from a more thorough identification and examination of best practices both domestically and in other countries.

Similar questions arise in relation to governance questions of how best to reach out to religious communities while remaining cognizant of the reality that they typically consist of individuals and sub-groups with widely divergent views.

Data Gaps

Though interest in research on potential impacts and policy responses to religious diversity has increased over the last decade, basic information on religious identity and its relationship to many areas of interest to public policy remains scarce.

The question on religion on the census ("What is this person's religion?") is asked only once a decade and was last asked in 2001 – before the events of 9/11 – and will not be asked again until 2011. Moreover, census results are often reported only in broad categories, such as Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, and so on. While this may be relevant for many purposes, describing adherents of any one faith as forming part of a single homogenous community limits researchers' ability to take into account the rich ethnic, linguistic, and cultural background of each religion's adherents when exploring such issues as self-identity and success in immigrant integration. For example, analysis based on a "Muslim" community in Canada that includes South Asians, Africans, Middle Easterners, and East Asians among others, would be no more helpful than an analysis based on a Canadian "Catholic" population of French Canadians, Filipinos, Eastern Europeans, Africans, and Latin Americans among others.

At present, the most up-to-date source of detailed information on religious identities is public opinion research. Statistics Canada posed certain other religious identity questions on more recent surveys, such as the General Social Survey (GSS) conducted in 1998, but from a researcher's perspective, sample sizes are too small to permit effective research on minority faiths in Canada (much less on specific ethnic or linguistic subgroups among their adherents). The Ethnic Diversity Survey, a post-censal survey by Statistics Canada, which has better minority counts, is also considered dated in that the survey was in the field just a year

after 2001, and attitudes about religion may have changed as we have moved further away from 9/11.

Conclusion

Religious diversity is a demographic fact in Canada. While often subsumed under the domain of culture in the past, dealing with religious diversity has emerged in recent years as a topic of its own as governments and the courts are increasingly asked to respond to or arbitrate tensions arising from religious differences. This article has proposed an analytic framework to approach religious diversity at the levels of individuals and communities, and governments, as well as society as a whole. It also highlights the need for better understanding of the factors associated with the integration of religious communities into Canadian society. 🌍

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Introduction

This article sets the stage for an examination of the changing role and impact of religious identities on international relations (see Thomas, p. 50), focusing on the religious revivals and demographic shifts underway within the two largest world religions – Islam and Christianity – and their impact on certain regions of the world.

The Politics and Demographics of the Global Resurgence of Religion

A number of central features characterize the global resurgence of religion now underway both in public perceptions and as a reality that will, by

Europe, North America, and the former Soviet Union – to the developing countries. The North accounted for 32 percent of the world's population in 1900, 29 percent in 1950, 25 percent in 1970, about 18 percent in 2000, and it is estimated that the North will account for only 10 to 12 percent of the world's population in 2050 (Jenkins, 2007). In the 21st century, the West or North is becoming in many ways more post-Christian, and Christianity in the global South is becoming more and more post-Western (Sanneh, 2003).

These shifts are crucial for understanding how the cultural and religious landscape of world politics is changing, and what this cultural and ideological shift will mean for international relations. We can no longer assume, rather parochially, that Christianity in Europe or even Anglo-Saxon evangelicalism will determine the global future of Christianity (Freston, 2001). Scholars and commentators of international relations often juxtapose terms, such as “the West” and “the Islamic world,” with the idea that the West, at least in a cultural sense, still represents Christianity. The reality is that Christianity apart possibly from Latin America (which really includes a variety of cultures, indigenous as well as European), and the small, and now dwindling, minorities of Christians in the Middle East, is increasingly a post-Western religion, dominated by peoples and countries of the global South. Despite what some of their leaders may claim, the evangelicals, Pentecostals, and others who constitute the Christian Right in the United States are not the same as global evangelicalism or Pentecostalism, nor are they the same as the Christianity of

Global Trends in Religious Identity

necessity, affect the public policies of countries around the world, especially their foreign policies.

First, the religious resurgence is global in a geographic sense; it is not confined to any particular region of the world. The global resurgence of religion is widely recognized as a key phenomenon in the global South. The religious resurgence follows a massive, general demographic shift from the developed countries in the North –

the global South. If US policy makers now feel that Islam is the most urgent challenge for foreign policy, it may be the case that the politics of global Christianity over the long haul will be as important.

Second, the global resurgence of religion is also taking place throughout the world in countries with different cultural and religious traditions, including the main non-Christian world religions: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. The rise in Orthodox Judaism, for example, in Israel and the United States has an impact on politics in both countries (demographically displacing more liberal Jewish secularism since conservative Jews have more children than secular Jews, although it may be a bit too much to claim that Jewish liberals are literally dying out). Notwithstanding their Marxist pasts, genuine religious revivals are also going on in China and Russia. Of even greater potential importance is the dynamic nature and geographic range (and overlap) of Islamic and Christian revivals in some of the world's most populous countries.

Growth of Christianity in China and East/South-East Asia

Christianity is exploding in China, which comprises a fifth of the world's population, and the state now encourages religion, even if it is for its own ends – social order amidst a rapid economic development (Lai, 2003; Kindopp and Hamrin, 2004). China has one of the largest Pentecostal and evangelical Christian populations in the world. Pentecostalism is also at the cutting edge of Christian growth in

Evangelicals subscribe to a set of core beliefs: the authority and sufficiency of the Bible – Scriptures over tradition, particularly the Catholic Church's tradition; the uniqueness of redemption through the death of Christ upon the cross, such that salvation comes through faith and grace, rather than good works; a need for an inner, personal, conversion; and the necessity, propriety, and urgency of evangelism.

Pentecostals adhere to the same set of core beliefs as evangelicals but their Christian practice tends to be more emotive, arguing that modern Christians can be infused with the power of the Holy Spirit in ways similar to the disciples in the New Testament, and so they tend to believe in healing, miracles, and "speaking in tongues" or unknown languages.

Source: McNath (1993: 183-184, 229-233 and 428-434).

South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam, all of which have vibrant and significant Christian minorities.

The issue is not whether China is going to become through national conversion a predominantly Christian country: this is unlikely. Rather, it is whether Christianity will in the coming decades achieve the same degree of cultural permeation of national life in China that it has already achieved in South Korea. What this possible religious change may mean for democracy, human rights, and foreign policy will need to be part of any evaluation of China's role in international relations (Aikman, 2006; Lampman, 2007; Pew, 2007) in the 21st century.

Revival of Orthodox Christianity in Russia

A genuine religious revival of Orthodox Christianity is also taking place in Russia after 70 years of suppression, and this suggests how durable some religious identities can be even in a global era. The Russia Orthodox Church's

recent unification of its domestic and overseas hierarchies, a legacy of the Soviet era, and closer church-state relations, facilitated by "petro-populism" or "oil nationalism," has established the religious and political foundations for a type of Orthodox identity politics – a greater role of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church on the world stage. The Moscow Patriarchate sees reunification as an important step in spreading its global influence, and the Russian state sees the restoring of the unity of the entire Russian world – the ties between Russia proper and the Russian diaspora (in which Orthodoxy is its spiritual foundation), as part of its quest to regain global influence (Daniel, 2006; Eggert, 2007; Garrard and Garrard, 2008; Holley, 2007; Marsh, 2004; Miller Llana, 2007; Trumbull, 2007).

Global Expansion and Overlap of Islam and Evangelical/Pentecostal Christianity

The world religions where we can most see explosions of religious fervour are the global Islamic resurgence and the global spread of evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity.

The global Islamic resurgence is a genuine Islamic revival, and is more wide ranging than Islamic fundamentalism (BBC, 2003; Kepel, 1994; Mahmood, 2005; White, 2002). A visible return to Islam can be observed in dress (the veil for women, a beard for men), prayers, and rituals in countries that make up the Islamic world. A key part of this revival is that people want Islam to be the organizing principle in their lives and also in their society, generating significant debate, discussion and, in some cases, more violent confrontations (e.g. the riots and politics over the contested meanings of Islam and secularism in Turkey in 2007) (Berger, 2006; Shaktman Hurd, 2008).

The Islamic world is far larger than the Arab world, stretching across non-Arab Central and South Asia through to Southeast Asia, up to and including Indonesia, which is the Muslim country with the largest population (Table 1). In fact, the four largest Muslim countries (and seven of the top 8) are non-Arab, and are mostly outside the Middle East, which qualifies any quick generalizations about Islam regarding women, democracy, or terrorism. Three of the four countries with the largest Muslim populations are in South Asia (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh), and the fourth (Indonesia) is in

TABLE 1
The Islamic World: Muslim Population by Country

Rank	Country	Muslim Population	% Muslim
1	Indonesia	204,498,135	86.1
2	Pakistan	164,160,045	95.0
3	India	153,831,451	13.4
4	Bangladesh	127,443,924	83.0
5	Egypt	735,421,168	90.0
6	Nigeria	73,127,656	50.0
7	Turkey	71,749,022	99.8
8	Iran	64,557,719	98.0
9	Morocco	33,896,758	98.7
10	Algeria	33,431,971	99.0
11	Afghanistan	32,410,992	99.0
12	Sudan	28,152,919	70.0
13	Saudi Arabia	28,146,656	100.0
14	Iraq	27,374,544	97.0
15	Ethiopia	27,074,707	32.8

Source: CIA (2008).

Southeast Asia. Turkey (in Europe) is also in the top 10, so if Turkey joins the EU, the EU will have as a member one of the largest Muslim countries in the world. By current projections, Nigeria (a country whose population is almost evenly split between Muslims and Christians) will have a larger population than Pakistan or Bangladesh in 2050 and may be expected to climb further up the list of countries with the largest Muslim populations. Nigeria's Muslim-Christian demographics and (in the Islamic, northern part of the country) the confluence of criminal syndicates and radical Islamist groups have created concerns regarding international terrorism. Osama bin Laden has called on his followers to focus on Nigeria since 2003 (IISS, 2006).

The global spread of evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity is the most dramatic religious explosion in the world today (Martin, 2008). It has now replaced the Eastern Orthodox churches as the largest single group of Christian denominations after Catholicism. It used to be thought that evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity was mainly private and personal (i.e. its growth would not conflict with perceived trends toward greater secularization), and that its followers were largely apolitical in their outlook. The 2006 Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life argued that this view needs considerable rethinking: "Pentecostalism's growing numbers will almost certainly guarantee that the movement will be a major force in shaping the political as well as the religious landscape of the 21st

century.” Pentecostalism is rapidly spreading across the world, and is remaking the face of global Christianity. According to the World Christian Database, there may be as many as 250 million Pentecostals: one-eighth of the world’s two billion Christians and about one in twenty-five of the global population (Martin, 2002).

As can be seen in tables 1 and 2, three of the countries with the largest Muslim populations (India, Indonesia, and Nigeria) are also countries with large numbers of Pentecostal Christians and have sizable Christian minorities overall.

The majority of Indians are Hindu (80.5%), but this dominance masks the considerable religious variation across India’s states. Muslims make up the majority of the population in Lakshadweep (95%) and in Jammu and Kashmir (67%). Christians predominate in its small eastern states of Nagaland (90%), Mizoram (87%), and Meghalaya (70%), and are significant minorities in two southern states, Kerala (19%) and Tamil Nadu (6%). Sikhs are the majority in Punjab (59.9%) (Pew, nd). Long-standing tensions within India – notably in relation to caste – also have a significant inter-religious dimension. In particular, the movement for Dalit rights (i.e. for the country’s 150 million to 250 million Dalits or “untouchables”) has long featured an undercurrent of Dalit religious conversions, notably to Islam, to Buddhism and, increasingly in recent decades, to Christianity. These conversions have angered Hindu nationalists and been an ongoing source of Hindu-Christian tensions (Jenkins, 2007: 214-217).

TABLE 2
Pentecostals by Country

Rank	Country	Number	% of Country's Population
1	China	72.0 million	5.6
2	USA	20.2 million	7.0
3	Brazil	15.0 million	9.0
4	Nigeria	13.0 million	11.0
5	Philippines	9.0 million	12.0
6	Indonesia	7.0 million	3.0
7	India	5.2 million	0.5

Source: *Operation World* (2000); *World Christian Database* (nd); *United Nations Population Fund* (2001).

In Indonesia and Nigeria, ethnic divisions can intensify religious conflicts. Indonesia, although it is the largest Muslim country in the world, also has a sizeable minority Christian community of 23 million or about 10 percent of the population. What has led to inter-religious tension is that they are concentrated in particular ethnic groups and in particular regions. In the cities, Christianity is associated with the ethnic Chinese, who are also often merchants – a source of tension in the wake of the economic downturn in the late 1990s. Christian regions are scattered across some Indonesian islands, including Timor, Sulawesi, Lombok, and Maluku (the Moluccas or Spice Islands). East Timor, which is predominantly Catholic, achieved independence from Indonesia after a bitter liberation struggle (which Osama bin Laden opposed).

Conclusions

A variety of factors put strains on older traditions of Muslim-Christian, Hindu-Christian, and Muslim-Hindu tolerance in a number of major coun-

tries around the world. These include the spread of Islamic and Christian revivalism, their doctrines and demographics, and the way ethnicity and poverty (or economic success) often coincide with religious affiliation. Without greater inter-religious dialogue and more thoughtful approaches to political theology and to religion and development, it is possible the future may see more political instability and outbreaks of inter-religious violence.

These developments may also have significant geopolitical implications. In particular, as noted by Jenkins (2006: 9; 2007: 121), China and other countries in East Asia are frequently thought of as the Asian anchors of the Pacific Rim, but how much would it change perceptions of world politics and the prospects for conflict in East and Southeast Asia if, in the wake of increasing Christian influences on the culture and society of these countries, the Pacific Rim came to be seen as a “Christian arc” surrounding Muslim Indonesia? The media often cast Islam as the defining religion of the developing world, but to talk about

global resurgence of Islam without also talking about the global spread of evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity is to miss a key part of the story (Jenkins, 2007).

The global spread of Christianity is shifting its centre of gravity from the industrialized countries to the developing world. The majority of Christians in the world by 2050 will be non-white, non-Western, from the ex-colonized world, rather than the former colonizers, and will espouse forms of Christianity that are more emotive and charismatic than those found in the West (which the Pew Forum's recent study of Pentecostals indicates is not the same as saying they are political conservatives). What is more, many of these Christians will be living as minorities under non-Christian and often hostile regimes. The demographic shift in Christianity to the global South, the changing theologies of revivalist forms of Islam and Christianity, and the demographics of Islam and Christianity will make living with religious diversity and inter-religious dialogue, especially the relations between Muslims and Christians and the politics of religious freedom, increasingly important issues in international politics in the early 21st century. 🌍

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Even in countries with long histories of mass immigration, specific migrant groups sometimes garner particular concern or attention. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, immigrants to Canada arrived almost exclusively from Christian Europe. But religious divisions among Christians were vastly more charged at the time, and as Catholic immigrants from Ireland, Poland, and Southern Europe added to the ranks of the French-speaking Catholics already living in Canada, the Anglo-Protestant elites wrung their hands and worried that these people would never integrate. With attachments to the Vatican that were sometimes seen as undercutting nationalist loyalties, and with a desire for a separate school system that would

Similar doubts were raised in relation to the large numbers of Orthodox Christians emigrating from Eastern Europe.

Today, with Catholics and Orthodox Christians long installed at the heart of mainstream Canadian life, Canadian Muslims are now under special scrutiny.¹ Against a global backdrop of concern over terrorism carried out under the banner of militant Islam, as well as a handful of spats about Muslim headcoverings (mostly *hijabs* and *niqabs*), some Canadian commentators have expressed concern about whether Muslims who immigrate to this country are willing to adapt to Canada's secular, liberal norms.

In late 2006 and early 2007, Environics Research Group surveyed Canadian Muslims to gain insight into this minority religious community's attitudes toward Canada and its desire to participate fully in Canadian life. This study was inspired, to a great extent, by a parallel study conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes project in France, Spain, Germany, and Great Britain. Like the Pew project, the Environics study included a survey of an oversample of Muslims (in Canada's case, the sample included 500 Muslims) as well as a survey of the population at large designed to measure the general public's attitudes toward the Muslim minority.

The findings in this article are drawn from telephone interviews conducted with 500 Canadian Muslims and

continue to inculcate Catholicism into new generations, Catholics were seen as a social subgroup that might never successfully fit into Canadian society.

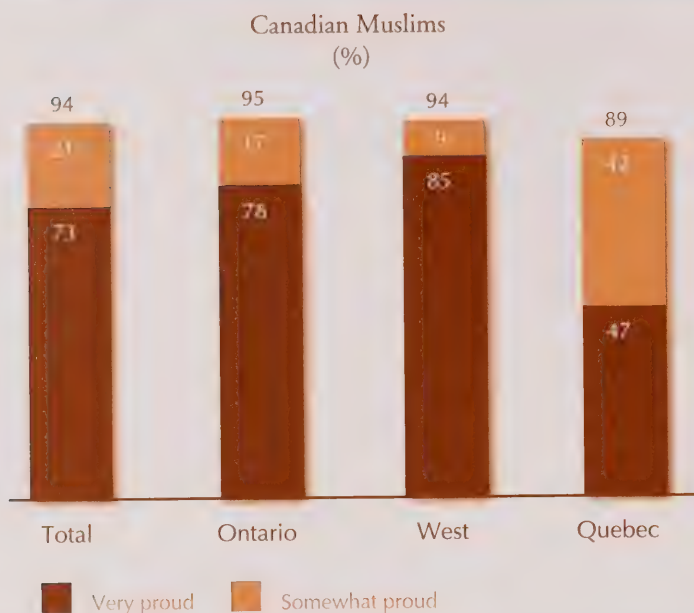
1 Other minority religious groups, most notably Sikhs, have also been scrutinized at various moments in the last few decades. International events, including the September 11th attacks, the London transit bombings, and various cultural clashes in Europe (such as international Muslim anger over a Danish cartoonist's depictions of the Prophet Mohammed) have conspired to make scrutiny of, and anxiety about, Canada's Muslim minority especially intense.

Muslims in Canada

Findings from the 2007

Environics Survey

Muslims are proud of being Canadian, although with less enthusiasm in Quebec



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Muslims and the population at large do not feel Canadians are hostile to Muslims

How many Canadians are hostile to Muslims? (%)



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2,000 members of the Canadian general public. The Muslim survey took place from November 30, 2006 to January 5, 2007. Interviews were conducted in English, French, Arabic, and Urdu. Comparisons with census data indicate the survey sample mirrors the total Canadian Muslim population in demographic characteristics as well as regional distribution. The general population survey occurred between December 8 and December 30, 2006. Interviews were conducted in English and French.

The survey results offer cause for optimism about the successful integration of Muslim immigrants (about nine in ten Canadian Muslims are foreign-born) into Canadian life. Canadian Muslims expressed simultaneous pride in Canada and pride in Islam, a willingness to participate in and adapt to Canadian norms, and a condemnation of the extremism that is sometimes cast as commonplace in other countries with significant Muslim populations. Although seriously concerned about discrimination and underemployment, Canadian Muslims expressed feelings of goodwill toward Canada and were the least likely Muslim minority in any Western country surveyed to express a sense that the bulk of their compatriots are hostile to Islam.

Canadians at large expressed moderately positive views of Islam, but were less likely than Muslims to feel that most Muslims wish to integrate fully into the Canadian mainstream. Likely as a result of this underlying uncertainty about Muslims' willingness to integrate, the general population was more

inclined than the Muslim minority to favour certain measures geared toward forced adaptation, such as a ban on Muslim headscarves in public buildings (although the proportion of Canadians favouring this measure remains a minority).

General Impressions of Islam and Muslims

Muslims were divided on whether other Canadians' impression of Islam was generally positive or negative. Half of Canadian Muslims (50%) believed Canadians' impression of Islam to be positive, while four in ten (39%) believed Canadians have a negative impression of Islam overall. Seven percent thought Canadians' impression of the Islamic faith was neither positive nor negative.

Notably, when Canadians stated their own impressions of Islam, their answers corresponded closely to Muslims' expectations. Half of all Canadians (49%) said their impression of Islam was generally positive, while about four in ten (38%) said their impression of the religion was negative. Eight percent said they were neither positive nor negative about Islam.

These results are almost the same as in the Focus Canada omnibus survey in the first quarter of 2004. It is also worth noting that as Canadians' personal contact with Muslims increases, their impressions of Islam become more positive: among those who said they often encountered Muslims in their daily lives, 70 percent expressed a positive impression of Islam. Among those who

rarely or never have personal contact with Muslims, by contrast, just 36 percent had a positive impression of Islam.

Most Muslims in Canada did not see other Canadians as hostile to their coreligionists. When asked to estimate how many Canadians are hostile to Muslims, 16 percent of Canadian Muslims said most (5%) or many (11%) Canadians were hostile. The majority of Muslim Canadians believed just some Canadians (39%) or very few (36%) were hostile to adherents of Islam.

When the general public was asked to make a similar estimate about Canadian hostility toward Muslims, the proportion perceiving hostility was somewhat higher. About three in ten Canadians believed most (7%) or many (21%) Canadians were hostile to Muslims. Forty-four percent believed some Canadians were hostile, while a quarter (24%) saw very few Canadians as being hostile to adherents of Islam.

Canadian Muslims were less likely than Muslims in Great Britain, France, Spain, and Germany to feel hostility from the society in which they live. Seventeen percent of Canadian Muslims felt that most or many Canadians were hostile toward Muslims. This is markedly lower than the proportions of Muslims in Germany (51%), Great Britain (42%), France (39%), and Spain (31%) who felt that most or many of their compatriots were hostile to Muslims.

Canadian Muslims were less likely than Muslims in Great Britain, France, Spain, and Germany to feel hostility from the society in which they live.

Integration and Identity

Muslims and the general public both perceived a growing sense of Islamic identity among Canadian Muslims, but differed on whether this was a good thing for Canada. Most Canadian Muslims believed that, overall, Canadian Muslims have a very strong (30%) or fairly strong (42%) sense of Islamic identity. The general population had a very similar perception; most Canadians believed Canadian Muslims have a very strong (27%) or fairly strong (44%) sense of Islamic identity.

Muslim Canadians and the general public also shared the impression that the sense of Islamic identity in Canada was on the rise: 69 percent of Canadian Muslims and 62 percent of all Canadians believed there was a growing sense of Muslim identity in this country. Muslim Canadians differed from the general population, however, in their perception that this growing sense of Islamic identity was a good thing for Canada. Of those Canadian Muslims who saw a growing sense of Islamic identity among their coreligionists, 85 percent believed this was a good thing for Canada and nine percent believed it was bad. By contrast, among members of the general population who perceived a growing sense of Islamic identity in Canada, more than half (56%) saw this as a bad thing for Canada, while just a third (33%) saw it as a good thing.

Canadian Muslims tended to say they were positive about the growing sense of Muslim identity in Canada, because the values of Islam are positive and they believe Canada will benefit from the expression of these values. The population at large, however, expressed reservations about a strengthened Muslim identity in Canada, citing the fear of extremism as the main reason.

Most Canadian Muslims identify first as Muslim, and second as Canadian, but their pride in being Canadian matches the national average. When asked whether they identify first as Muslim or first as Canadian, 56 percent of Canadian Muslims chose Muslim first, while 23 percent chose Canadian first. Notably, 17 percent of Canadian Muslims *volunteered* the answer that both identities are of equal importance to them. (“Both” was not an option presented by the interviewers to preserve comparability with the Pew surveys in Europe, but in view of participants’ eagerness to employ this answer, the questionnaire will be adjusted in the next wave of Canadian research.)

There is a notable generational difference on this question, with Muslims aged 18 to 29 markedly more likely than average (77%) to describe themselves as Muslim first. Among those in the youngest cohort, 14 percent called themselves Canadian first and eight percent volunteered that they were equally Canadian and Muslim. The

question of youth identity is an important one, and not heavily emphasized in this research. Whether young Canadian Muslims’ relatively strong embrace

of their minority religious identity is a sign of pride in Islam (which John Berry of Queen’s University would likely count as a positive) or a sign of alienation from the wider Canadian society resulting from discrimination and exclusion (as Jeffrey Reitz and Rupa Banerjee of the University of Toronto might argue) is

beyond the scope of this study but obviously bears examination.

While the majority of Canadian Muslims identified themselves first as Muslim, almost all (94%) said they were proud to be Canadian. This proportion is the same as the proportion of all Canadians (93%) who expressed pride in being Canadian. Similar proportions of Muslim Canadians (73%) and the general public (74%) said they were very proud to be Canadian.

Muslims believed their coreligionists want to integrate into Canadian society, while the general public perceived Muslims as wanting to remain separate from the wider society.

When asked whether they thought most Muslims wanted to “adopt Canadian customs and way of life” or “be distinct from the larger Canadian society,” a modest majority (55%) of Muslims said they believed most Muslims wanted to adopt Canadian

customs. An additional 13 percent believed their coreligionists wanted both to adopt Canadian customs and remain distinct as a community. Just a quarter of Canadian Muslims (23%) believed that most of their coreligionists in Canada wanted to remain distinct from the wider society.

Among the general population, the proportions were roughly reversed, with just a quarter of all Canadians (25%) believing that most Muslims are interested in adopting Canadian customs, and a majority (57%) believing that Muslims wish to remain distinct. Seven percent of the general public believed Muslim Canadians are interested in both integrating and remaining distinct.

In Canada, the disparity between the opinions of the Muslim community and the general population was the second largest of any country surveyed (after Spain) on this issue. In other words, Canadians were more likely than citizens of France, Germany, or Britain to underestimate the desire of Muslims in their country to integrate into the wider society.

Muslims and the general public diverged notably on support for the recognition of Sharia law and the banning of Muslim headscarves in public institutions. About half of Canadian Muslims (53%) believed Sharia law should be recognized by Canadian governments as a legal basis for Muslims to settle family disputes. A third (34%) believed Sharia law should not be recognized. Among the Canadian public, by contrast, eight in ten (79%) believed that Sharia law should not be recog-

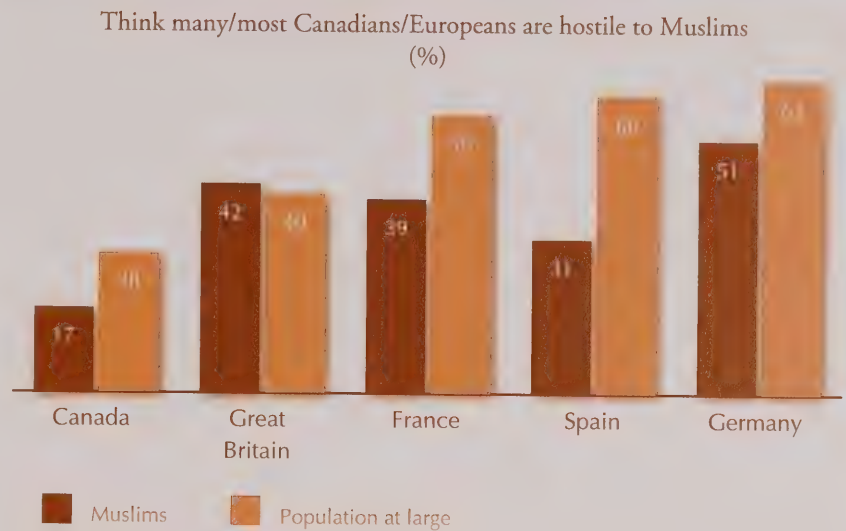
nized by Canadian governments, while just one in ten (11%) supported such recognition.

A divergence of opinion – albeit a less marked one – also emerged on the banning of Muslim headscarves in public places, a measure adopted most notably in public schools in France. Canadian Muslims overwhelmingly (86%) believed that such a ban was a bad idea, while just one in ten (9%) called it a good idea.

Among the Canadian general public, a majority (55%) agreed with Canadian Muslims that the headscarf ban was a bad idea, but over a third (36%) called the ban a good idea. The Canadian public was similar to the British and American publics in expressing majority opposition to the headscarf ban; 57 percent of Americans and 62 percent of Britons believed the ban was a bad idea. By contrast, majorities in Germany (54%) and France (78%) favoured the headscarf ban, while Spain was more divided (48 percent opposed to the ban and 43 percent in favour).

This divergence of opinion between the Canadian Muslim population and the Canadian population at large is, probably, rooted in the two groups' divergent perceptions of the general willingness of Muslims to integrate into Canadian society. While Muslims were relatively confident that their coreligionists wished to participate in Canadian life – and saw no benefit (or possible harm) in, for example, a ban on headscarves – Canadians at large, particularly Quebecers, were less certain about Muslims' underlying willingness to integrate and placed great

Canadian Muslims and the population at large are the least likely to perceive hostility to Muslims in their country



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stock in symbolic adaptations, such as the abandonment of religious clothing. Hijabs and niqabs were seen by many secular Canadians, particularly Quebecers from Catholic backgrounds, as symbols of patriarchy and a form of religiosity that Quebec as a society largely abandoned only a few decades ago.

Life in Canada

Canadian Muslims expressed satisfaction with life in Canada, reporting that Muslims were better off in Canada than in other Western countries, and that Muslim women enjoyed a higher quality of life in Canada than they would in most Muslim countries. Nevertheless, nearly a third of Canadian Muslims said they had had a negative experience related to their race,

ethnicity, or religion in the last two years. In addition, majorities expressed concern about unemployment and discrimination.

In Canada, Muslim satisfaction with the direction of the country was higher than the national average. Eight in ten Muslim Canadians (81%), compared to six in ten members of the general public (61%), expressed overall satisfaction at the way things were going in Canada. Canadian Muslims expressed greater satisfaction with the direction in which their country was headed than did Muslims in France, Germany, Spain, or Great Britain.

Three quarters of Canadian Muslims believed Muslims were treated better in Canada than in other Western countries. Another 17 percent saw Muslims

as experiencing similar treatment in Canada to what Muslims encounter in other Western countries. Just three percent believed they were worse off in Canada than their coreligionists in other countries in the West.

Seven in ten Canadian Muslims (70%) believed the quality of life for Muslim women was better in Canada than in most Muslim countries. Twenty-three percent believed Muslim women's quality of life in Canada was about the same as it would be in most Muslim countries. Just three percent saw Muslim women as worse off in Canada. Canadian Muslims (70%) were markedly more likely than those in France (62%), Britain (58%), Germany (50%), or Spain (46%) to see Muslim women as better off than they would be in most Muslim countries.

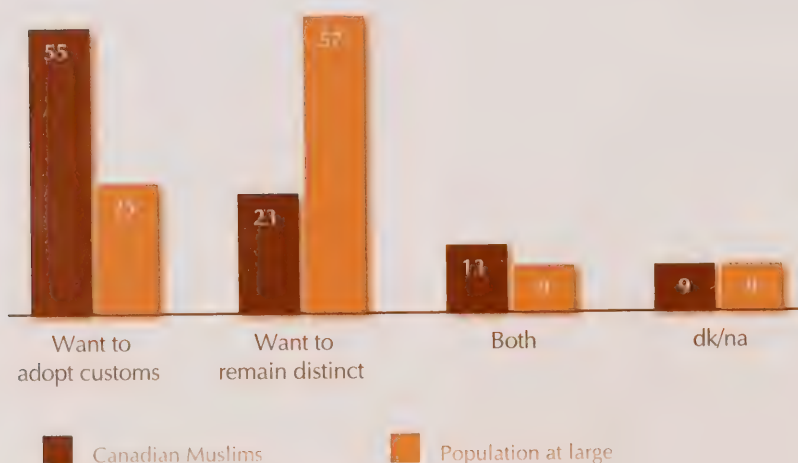
Three in ten Canadian Muslims reported experiences of discrimination in the previous two years. Thirty percent of Canadian Muslims said they had "had a bad experience" due to their race, ethnicity, or religion in the last two years. Canadian Muslims were roughly average in this regard. They were more likely than German (19%), Spanish (25%), or British (28%) Muslims to report negative experiences related to ethnicity or religion, but less likely than French Muslims (37%) to report the same. Notably, the youngest cohort of Canadian Muslims was the most likely to report an experience of discrimination: 42 percent of those aged 18 to 29 reported such an experience, 11 points above the Muslim average. Women were also more likely than men to say they had been discrimi-

nated against, a disparity that may be linked to headscarves, which identify women as Muslim.

When Canadian Muslims were asked to rate their level of concern about a slate of issues relating to Muslim life in Canada, the proportions saying they were very or somewhat worried was highest on the issues of discrimination (67%) and unemployment (64%). Smaller, but still significant, proportions of Muslims declared themselves to be very or somewhat concerned about extremism among Canadian Muslims (53%), the influence of music, movies, and television on Muslim youth in Canada (49%), and the declining importance of religion among Canadian Muslims (48%). Muslim Canadians expressed markedly less concern about women taking on modern roles in society (26%).

Muslims say they want to adopt Canadian customs, but the population at large doubts this

Do Muslims want to adopt Canadian customs or remain distinct?
(%)



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Extremism and Terror

Canadian Muslims expressed minimal support for extremists who claim to act in the name of Islam, and estimated very low levels of support among their fellow Muslims in Canada for extremist activities. Muslims living in Canada felt a terrorist attack perpetrated by Canadians of Muslim background was very unlikely. In addition, a large majority of Canadian Muslims felt a strong responsibility to report on potentially violent extremists in their communities.

Four in ten Canadian Muslims (40%) believed there was a struggle in this country between moderate and extremist Muslims. Of those who believed such a struggle was afoot, 80 percent personally identified with the moderate

side, while 14 percent identified with the extremist side, though it is by no means clear that most (or even any) among this subgroup were prone to act on those views, especially with regard to violence. The general public (56%) was more likely than Muslims themselves to perceive a struggle between moderates and extremists in the Muslim community.

When asked to rate the likelihood that Canada would experience terrorist attacks in the near future carried out by Canadians of Muslim background, eight in ten Muslims described such an event as not very (21%) or not at all (60%) likely. About one in ten Muslim Canadians thought a domestic terror attack was either very (3%) or somewhat (8%) likely.

The general public was considerably more likely than the Muslim population to believe a terrorist attack perpetrated by Canadians with a Muslim background was likely. Most Canadians saw such an attack as either very (19%) or somewhat (40%) likely. A minority said it was not very (26%) or not at all (11%) likely.

Canadian Muslims felt a strong responsibility to be vigilant about extremists in their communities. The overwhelming majority of Muslims in Canada believed ordinary, law-abiding Muslims have a

responsibility to “report on potentially violent extremists they might encounter in their mosques and communities.” Seven in ten Muslim Canadians (72%) said that ordinary Muslims have a great deal of responsibility to report on

potentially violent extremists they may encounter. An additional 15 percent said law-abiding Muslims have at least some responsibility in this regard. Just six percent of Muslim Canadians felt no responsibility at all to report on extremists they suspect might perpetrate violence in the name of Islam.

Three quarters (75%) of Canadian Muslims were aware of the arrests of 18 men and boys in the Greater Toronto Area on terrorism charges in 2006. Of those Muslims who reported an awareness of these

arrests, three quarters (73%) said the attacks, if carried out, would have been not at all justified. Thirteen percent (of the 75 percent subsample who had heard of the arrests) said the attacks would have been either completely (5%) or somewhat (8%) justified. The combined total of those in the subsample saying the attacks would have been at least somewhat justified (13%) amounted to a little under 10 percent of the overall sample.

The findings of the Environics survey of Canadians Muslims, as well as the survey of the Canadian general public on Muslim participation in Canadian society, reveal areas of concern and misunderstanding, but also a strong foundation of goodwill between Muslim and non-Muslim Canadians.

Asked whether they had any sympathy with the feelings and motives of those who allegedly wanted to carry out the attacks, eight in ten Canadian Muslims (82%) said they had no sympathy with the young men's feelings and motives. Nine percent expressed some sympathy with the young men, while two percent expressed mixed feelings.

When asked to estimate how many Muslims in Canada supported extremist groups, such as al Qaeda, just three percent of Muslims believed that most (2%) or many (1%) of their coreligionists in Canada supported such groups. Eight in ten Canadian Muslims said that just some (11%), very few (61%), or no (11%) Muslims in Canada supported extremist groups. Fifteen percent of Canadian Muslims said they did not know how many Muslims in this country supported such organizations.

Muslims were notably less likely than the population at large to imagine support among the Canadian Muslim population for extremist groups. Still, among Canadians at large, just 13 percent estimated that most (5%) or many (8%) Muslims in Canada supported al Qaeda and other such organizations. Most Canadians believed that just some (26%) or very few (51%) Muslims in Canada supported such groups.

Conclusion

The findings of the Environics survey of Canadian Muslims, as well as the survey of the Canadian general public on Muslim participation in Canadian society, reveal areas of concern and misunderstanding, but also a strong foundation of goodwill between Muslim

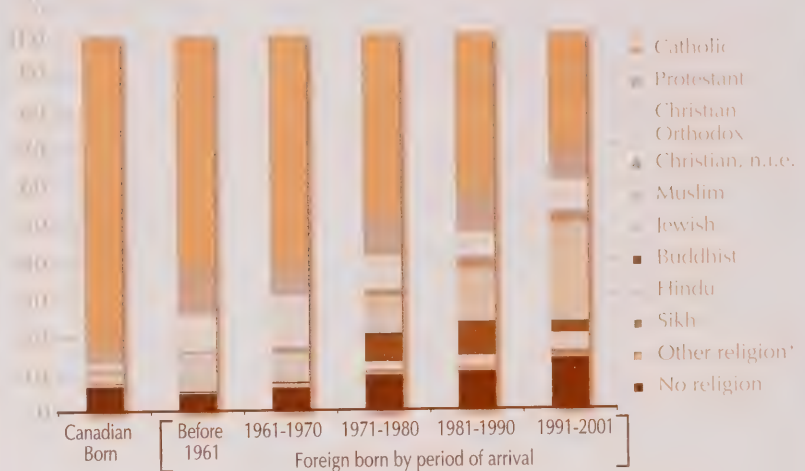
and non-Muslim Canadians. Environics research shows that in their optimism, aspirations, and feelings of both Canadian and minority-group pride, Muslims in Canada have much in common with other immigrant groups in this country both past and present.

When the status, treatment, and behaviour of a minority group becomes politically charged – as in the case of Muslims today – sustained quantitative research into both attitudes and outcomes (such as employment outcomes, efforts toward social and political participation, and experiences of discrimination) can be an invaluable corrective to the sometimes inflammatory soundbites on the nightly news.

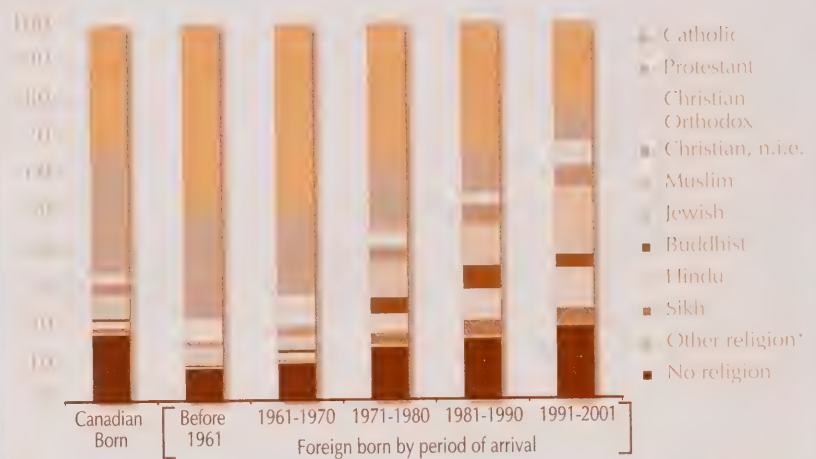
Environics Research Group intends to update this important survey in 2009 or 2010. ☺

Immigration Contributes to Growing Diversity

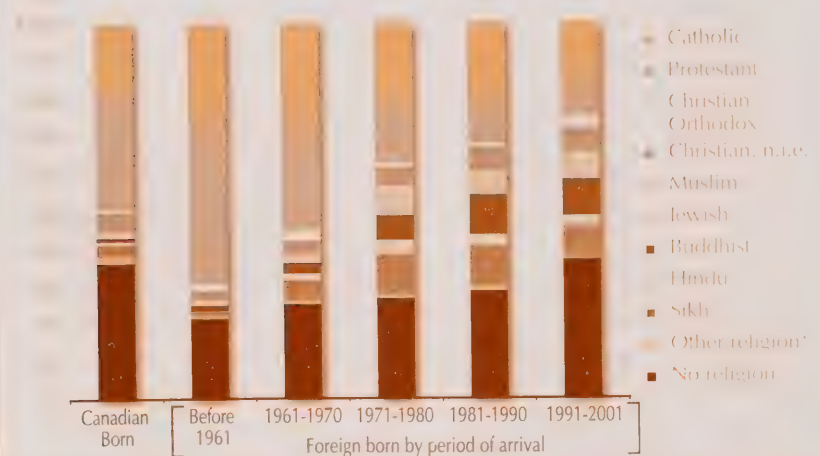
Immigration contributes to growing religious diversity: Montreal



Immigration contributes to growing religious diversity: Toronto



Immigration contributes to growing religious diversity: Vancouver



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, Beyond 20/20 Professional Browser 97F0022xCb01004.IVT

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Hans Küng, the internationally renowned theologian, has famously said, "There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions" (Küng, 2005).

While Küng was speaking about international conflicts, his adage could just as fruitfully be applied to the various ethno-religious communities that make up Canadian society.

Even though it already happens both in formal and informal ways in Canadian institutions, dialogue among the religions has never been a priority in government policy in Canada, and certainly not in its official policies and

This situation reflects the fact that religion as a whole has been largely ignored by official policies and practices regarding multiculturalism, which have focused on ethnicity and race in recent decades. The lack of focus on religious differences in these policies and practices is surprising given that the guarantee of freedom of religion and the promotion of religious diversity are written into every major piece of policy and legislation that defines the Canadian model of multiculturalism.

Those interested in promoting multiculturalism – that is, in making Canada a more diverse, participatory, and just society – should take religion seriously, because Canadians take it seriously. An emerging scholarship is demonstrating the intimate connection between ethnic and religious identity in many cases. This connection is so close that members of these communities themselves cannot say with certainty where ethnicity ends and religion begins.² One cannot claim to have recognized and honoured the particular identity of an ethnic community when one has refused to acknowledge those religious elements that members of that community see as central to their identity.

Such an attitude has the potential to alienate members of ethno-religious communities from mainstream society. Consequently, policy makers are beginning to see that a failure to acknowledge how important religious

practices around multiculturalism. Given that interfaith dialogue seeks to promote respect for difference, encourage co-operation, and overcome conflict, it is surprising that it has been ignored by those who hope to make Canada a more multicultural society.

Dialogue among the Religions in Canada¹

- 1 Initial research for this article was done under a research contract for Strategic Policy, Research and Planning Branch, Multiculturalism and Human Rights Program, Department of Canadian Heritage. The views expressed in this article are those of the author alone.
- 2 On the intimate connection between religion and ethnicity in Canadian society, see Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (eds.), 2005 and 2008.

identities are to many Canadians may lead to misunderstandings and injustices that translate into the polarization, ghettoization, and radicalization of certain religious communities – a situation with which many European countries are currently grappling.

Other Western countries with significant religious minorities (e.g. the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, as well as Canada) appear to be more accepting of religious differences. But even within these countries, there are significant differences in approach. For example, Canada lags far behind Britain and Australia, where governments sponsor councils to promote interfaith co-operation and education, as well as to advise governments, along with their agencies and institutions, on religious questions.

Yet these approaches may be well-adapted to the Canadian context, given the country's commitment to cultural diversity in general and given that Canada is not subject to a formal American-style separation of church and state or to France's system of public secularism or *laïcisme* (Seljak, 2008).

Accordingly, Canadian policy makers may want to consider bringing stakeholders together to examine seriously the prospect of

sponsoring a Canadian interfaith council along the lines of those that have been created in countries such as Australia (described in the text box on page 31). The council's functions could include:

- facilitating communication and co-operation between government departments, public institutions, and faith communities on an on-going basis;
- promoting understanding and co-operation among various religious groups;
- negotiating conflicts between adherents of religious faiths and within religious communities;

Canadian policy makers may want to consider bringing stakeholders together to examine seriously the prospect of sponsoring a Canadian interfaith council along the lines of those that have been created in countries such as Australia.

- helping members of immigrant communities with strong religious identities to integrate into Canadian society by promoting religious structures and practices that facilitate social integration;
- providing information to governments, public institutions, and the media on questions related to religious diversity;
- sponsoring public education – in schools and other forums – on religious diversity, tolerance, and freedom; and

- combatting religious extremism in its various forms (Seljak, 2008: 69-72).³

Such a council would fit in well with Canada's multiculturalism model, because it would build on existing practices and structures while remaining flexible enough to adapt to Canada's evolving religious demographics. This article examines the need for religious identity to be taken seriously in the promotion of multiculturalism in Canada, the role of interfaith dialogue in that effort, and the opportunities for promoting such a dialogue in Canada.

Religion and Multiculturalism

Less than a decade ago, it was virtually impossible to initiate a public discussion about the role of religion in Canadian society and the goals of multiculturalism policies and practices. The federal government sponsored little research on the topic, and suggestions that it be put on the agenda were often silenced with reference to Canada's policy of separation of church and state. Religion was rarely discussed at conferences on immigration and multiculturalism. At a National Metropolis Conference some years ago, a senior administrator in Canadian Heritage indicated that she would like to address the issue, but policy makers were afraid that raising the topic of religion would be divisive, controversial, and potentially dangerous. Besides, she observed, no one in government appeared to know anything about it.

3 See a fuller discussion in David Seljak et al., 2007: 93-95.

Fear and ignorance are not good starting points for creating policy. And in any case, such attitudes have been overtaken by events – as the recent report of Quebec’s Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences (the Bouchard-Taylor Commission) makes plain. Increasingly, policy makers, media analysts, and academics are realizing that religion remains an important element in the identities of many Canadians, both immigrants and those born in Canada. Religion has become a regular presence on the agenda at conferences on immigrant integration, multiculturalism, and diversity in Canada. Special issues of *Canadian Diversity*, *Canadian-American Research Series*, and the *Journal of International Migration and Integration* have addressed the topic. This issue of *Horizons* is another indication that religion has become a respectable topic of inquiry in policy and academic circles – as was the recent (November 2008) workshop on religion, secularism, and multiculturalism sponsored by the Ethnicity and Democratic Governance Project.

These changes have taken place because developments have begun to convince policy makers to take religious identity seriously. These include:

- recent events in which members of minority religious communities have sought recognition and accommodation of their specific needs from both public and private institutions;
- the persistence of religious intolerance and discrimination in Canadian society (for example, the second-most-common motivation for hate crimes, after race, is religion); and

- conflict between religious groups in Canada that have their roots in conflicts abroad.

Those interested in promoting multiculturalism are realizing that ignorance and fear regarding religious communities, especially minority religious communities in Canada, can undermine co-operation and compromise between these groups and other elements of society, as well as among these groups themselves. Awareness is growing that the goals of multiculturalism policy are best achieved through promotion of interfaith dialogue and education.

The Role of Interfaith Dialogue

Interfaith dialogue – as it is currently understood – is unique to modernity and essential to modern multicultural democracies. In such a dialogue, the partners are not interested in converting one another or in arguing the superiority of their own tradition. Instead, partners come to the dialogue in an open-ended encounter to learn about each other, explore a common religious issue (e.g. what is the meaning of suffering?), or address a pressing concern (e.g. how can we work together to promote human rights?). Dialogue can be at the grassroots or at the level of religious community leaders; it can be spontaneous or institutionalized; it may be goal-oriented or simply pursued as an end in itself.

Increasingly, policy makers, media analysts, and academics are realizing that religion remains an important element in the identities of many Canadians, both immigrants and those born in Canada.

Behind these myriad efforts is a negotiation of religious pluralism – that is, the effort to co-operate and ease conflicts between religious groups. It may well be that the effects of dialogue in promoting recognition of diversity, tolerance of others, and respect for human rights may not depend on the type of group or its purpose. Participants in dialogue often report that it is the personal friendships and connections – the face-to-face encounter with fellow human beings – that results in an acceptance of the “other” that often transcends doctrinal, ethical, or practical differences.

In Canada, the earliest efforts at interfaith dialogue emerged after the horror of the Holocaust; Jews and Christians came together to fight anti-Semitism. The reform of Canada’s immigration laws in the 1960s inspired a second wave of interfaith dialogue, as groups sprung up to include representatives of many of the world’s religious traditions that were increasingly part of the immigrant population. More recently, in the post-9/11 world, interfaith dialogue has taken on a new urgency as Canadians seek ways to address religious conflicts and counter religious intolerance and discrimination (Lamoureux Scholes, 2007: 6-7). The Canadian experience illustrates in practical terms the manner in which interfaith dialogue serves the goals of multiculturalism.

The Canadian Experience

In Canada, we see many kinds of interfaith groups. For example, a number of centres and groups focus on ecumenism – that is, improving relations between Christian denominations. Other groups, such as Interfaith Grand River in Kitchener-Waterloo in Southwestern Ontario, bring together representatives of many faiths.⁴ Some interfaith groups, such as the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto, focus on relations between just two communities.⁵ Many of these groups sponsor education programs to inform people about the richness of the various religious traditions in Canada. Others provide education on specific issues, such as intolerance and discrimination. For example, the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews has a program to eliminate intolerance and discrimination aimed at people because of their race, ethnicity, and religion. These groups help their members to address misconceptions that are rooted in fear and ignorance, as well as in historical grievances and transnational conflicts.

This coalition gathers together people of various faith communities who might be sure that they will not meet one another in heaven, but have managed to meet – and work together – in Ontario.

In addition, other multifaith groups work on specific issues, such as the public funding of education or the ecological crisis.⁶ The ability of a common

cause to overcome exclusivist religious beliefs and attitudes is demonstrated by the experience of Christian evangelicals, Jews, Sikhs, Muslims, Armenian Orthodox, and Seventh-day Adventists who formed the Coalition for Justice in Education Funding to pressure the Ontario government to fund other religiously based independent schools as it does Roman Catholic separate schools. This coalition gathers together people of various faith communities who might be sure that they will not meet one another in heaven, but have managed to meet – and work together – in Ontario.

Because Canada does not have a formal American-style separation of church and state, and because several government institutions (such as the Canadian Forces and Correctional Service of Canada) have chaplaincies, there are more practical and immediate reasons for those interested in promoting diver-

sity in Canada to pay attention to dialogue between the religions. The efforts of Correctional Service of Canada and the Canadian Forces chaplaincies to recognize and accommodate religious differences have been exemplary (as noted in the article by Benham Rennick in this issue). Beyond pragmatic issues, such as recognition of sacred days, provision of prayer space, and accommodation of religious diets, these agencies have begun to promote dialogue among religious groups in order to better serve their stakeholders. Officials in the health care and education systems have also addressed religious diversity and dialogue in creative and sensitive ways (Lamoureux Scholes, 2007: 7-9).⁷

Canadian governments at the federal, provincial-territorial and municipal levels could encourage faith-based non-governmental organizations in their varied efforts at interfaith dialogue and education. The federal government, for example, could consider giving groups official recognition and financial support – as has been done in other countries. In the United Kingdom, since the spring of 2001, the government has awarded an annual Strategy Grant to the Inter Faith Network for the UK, an independent voluntary organization, funded in large part by private donations, charitable trusts, and the faith

4 These groups are listed on the Canadian Council of Churches' Commission on Faith and Witness page at <<http://www.ccc-cce.ca/english/faith/inter.htm>>. (Accessed on November 2nd 2008)

5 See <<http://www.cjdt.org>>. (Accessed on November 2nd 2008)

6 For example, the Canadian Forum on Religion and Ecology brings together people of many faiths to explore spiritual responses to the environmental crisis.

7 The Ontario Multifaith Council is a example of a provincial government's sponsoring of a not-for-profit, non-governmental interfaith network that provides government agencies, businesses, interfaith organizations, religious groups, and the general public with information and training regarding religious diversity. However, recent reductions to the Council's funding have greatly impaired its effectiveness.

communities that belong to it. Since 2001, the Network has increasingly worked with the British government, advising various departments and ministries on issues relating to religious diversity in the United Kingdom (Pearce, 2007).⁸ The Network's publications indicate the type of educational work it does; they include *Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs*, *Women's Inter Faith Initiatives in the UK: A Survey*, *Looking After One Another: The Safety and Security of Our Faith Communities*, *Partnership for the Common Good: Inter Faith Structures and Local Government*, and *Community Cohesion: A New Agenda for Inter Faith Relations?*⁹

The 2004 Australian report *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia* suggested the creation of a similar multi-faith body that would advise the Council for Multicultural Australia and other government and non-government bodies (Cahill et al., 2004: 119-20). In the wake of that report, the Australian government has sponsored the Australian Partnership of Ethnic and Religious Organisations, as well as a number of Living in Harmony projects, which include the promotion of interfaith dialogue (Rutland, 2006). In co-operation with the Australian Multicultural Foundation and the World Conference of Religions for Peace, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous

Interfaith Councils: An Australian Example

The authors of *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia* suggested responsibilities that an interfaith advisory body might have. They wrote:

It is suggested that the Council for Multicultural Australia would incorporate the following terms of reference into its ambit of responsibility:

1. to advise the Australian Government on all matters pertaining to faith communities and interfaith harmony and co-operation for the social and economic well-being of Australia and to safeguarding it from extremism of all kinds;
2. to provide informed advice, based on consultation with faith community leaders and their communities, on policies and programs relevant to interfaith harmony and co-operation and to monitor and evaluate them;
3. to design, in association with heads of faith communities, ceremonies, services and pageants at times of national and international celebration, remembrances and tragedies that reflect the unity of Australia's multi-faith society;
4. to provide informed advice to government on policy and practice related to the entry into Australia of religious personnel on a permanent and temporary basis;
5. to oversee and monitor appropriate orientation and inservice programs for religious personnel newly arrived in Australia, for religious marriage celebrants and for religious personnel generally;
6. to disseminate to faith communities and their leaders material on government policies and programs, including through the electronic network of faith leaders and their communities;
7. to support and work with local government authorities in establishing and maintaining local multi-faith networks;
8. to work with the community, including the media, in educating the public about the role and function of faith traditions in local, national and international affairs;
9. to promote, in liaison with DFAT (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade), nationally and internationally Australia's image and reputation as a model of interfaith harmony;
10. to monitor the websites of Australia's ethnic and faith communities for material or links damaging to Australia's social cohesion;
11. to work for, in liaison with State and Australian educational authorities, interaction and co-operation between Australia's government and religious schools and for the design of appropriate curricula; and
12. to develop a resource centre for appropriate government and community use (Cahill et al., 2004).

8 The Inter Faith Network for the UK provides considerable resources: <<http://www.interfaith.org.uk>>. (Accessed November 2nd 2008).

9 These are available for a modest fee at <<http://www.interfaith.org.uk/publications/index.htm>> (Accessed March 12, 2007).

Affairs also produced a kit on the creation of local interfaith networks (Cahill and Leahy, 2004).

There are already a number of agencies dedicated to interfaith dialogue in Canada. The Canadian Council of Churches, as well as many church agencies, have already engaged in interfaith initiatives.¹⁰ Moreover, a variety of local, regional, and national groups are engaged in interfaith dialogue.¹¹ What is missing in Canada is government recognition of, and support for, interfaith groups that one finds in Britain and Australia at the national and local levels (though there is as yet no scholarship on the success or failure of the UK and Australian councils).

The Limits of Interfaith Dialogue and Education

Dialogue among the world's religions is as important for harmony within a society as it is for peaceful coexistence between societies, but it is no magic wand to solve problems of conflict, mistrust, and ignorance. It is an important first step that must be part of a coordinated effort to address religious intolerance and discrimination.

Once taken, this step will lead to a number of difficult challenges. Questions remain about how federal, provincial, or municipal governments can target their support to particular groups and agencies. For example, it might seem clear enough that Canadian Roman Catholics can be represented by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (although some Catholics might object), but it is not so

clear who could represent Canadian Muslims or Hindus. These communities are dispersed, divided, and decentralized. Imams and Hindu priests do not have the same status or play the same role in Islam and Hinduism that Roman Catholic priests and Protestant ministers do in Christianity.

The question of whom to invite to the dialogue leads to a more controversial issue: whether and how to engage with communities (or, more typically, segments within them) less disposed to dialogue and posing more fundamental challenges to Canadian values. Frequently, the members of religious communities who choose to participate in interfaith groups are those who are predisposed to respecting others, avoiding proselytism, and working out differences through dialogue and compromise. It is more difficult (though perhaps also more necessary) to engage with intransigents and radicals within those communities. A key question is how to bring them to the table without seeming to legitimate their challenges to the values of the broader society. These questions are both serious and difficult.

However difficult these questions, they should not deter us from addressing the challenges of promoting religious freedom and diversity through the sponsorship of interfaith dialogue and education. Canadians have faced many difficult challenges in the past, and should not be afraid to tackle the question of religious diversity now. It is widely assumed that people cannot discuss religion in a civil fashion, nor

compromise around religious teachings and practices. Religion is thought to make people conservative, rigid, and uncompromising.

But religious studies scholars know this to be a caricature of religion. No doubt some religious communities and thinkers are exclusivist and intransigent. However, there are many more instances when religion has inspired people to include others; when religious communities have evolved – and even reversed themselves on important issues.

Not long ago, people assumed that ethnic identity was fixed and that certain ethnic groups could not live and work together. The Canadian experience of multiculturalism has proved these assumptions to be false. Religion is not so different from other aspects of human culture. Canadians have learned to overcome differences rooted in ethnicity and to celebrate diversity. Our challenge in the 21st century is to work together despite differences over religion, and ultimately to celebrate our various religious identities. 🌍

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10 See, for example, the Canadian Council of Churches' Commission on Faith and Witness page at <<http://www.ccc-cce.ca/english/faith/inter.htm>> (accessed March 16, 2007).

11 For a partial list, see <<http://www.ccc-cce.ca/english/downloads/GroupsCentres.pdf>> (accessed March 15, 2007).

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Engaging Faith Communities: A UK Example

Government of the United Kingdom, Home Office Faith Communities Unit (2004), *Working Together: Co-operation between Government and Faith Communities; Recommendations of the Steering Group Reviewing Patterns of Engagement Between Government and Faith Communities in England*.

This government-commissioned report presents recommendations for co-operation between government departments and faith communities in England. The conclusions are based on local, regional, and national consultations with individuals in the government, various faith communities, and the broader community.

The report is premised on the understanding that faith is not simply a personal issue. Rather, faith communities and organizations have enriched and strengthened British

society over the centuries, contributing to a wide range of areas such as community development, education, and social inclusion. Therefore, it is important for government departments to work effectively with faith communities in policy development and service delivery. At the national level, the report offers guidelines for government departments to engage citizens from faith communities in policy consultations. The recommendations include, among others, 1) building capacity among faith communities to fully participate in policy consultations, 2) engaging all stakeholders in the process, 3) recognizing the diversities within these communities, 4) ensuring representation of women, youth, and seniors, and 5) developing "faith literacy" through faith awareness training among government officials.

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In Quebec, the relationship between the school system and religion underwent major transformation between 1997 and 2008. Over a decade or so, the confessional school system was completely secularized, from its machinery of government to religious education. In the past, Quebec's school system was based on a division between Catholics and Protestants. At the time of Confederation in 1867, education came under provincial jurisdiction according to the principles by which jurisdictions were divided among the federal and provincial parliaments. Protestants, who were a minority in the province of Quebec, demanded full administrative jurisdiction over their schools. Catholics, who were a minority in the other three con-

stitutional protection also covered elementary schools in Montréal and Québec City. Catholic French-Canadian students attended Catholic public schools (only a few schools were English Catholic) and all "non-Catholic" students went to Protestant schools, which were primarily English-speaking schools. Thus, for more than a century, public education in Quebec played a key role in the reproduction of both religious and linguistic markers.

When the Quebec government officially took over the education system in 1964 by adopting Bill 60, *An Act to Establish the Ministry of Education and the Superior Council of Education*, a Catholic committee and a Protestant committee were maintained within the Superior Council of Education. These committees played a key normative and decision-making role in guiding the educational projects of Catholic and Protestant schools, in religious education programs and teacher qualification. The confessional nature of the school system was secured.

1997 marked the beginning of major changes in this secular system. The process began when the Government of Quebec requested that Section 93 of the *Constitution Act, 1867* be amended so as to provide Quebec with full authority to redefine school boards along linguistic rather than confessional lines. The removal of constitutional obstacles opened the door to a series of recommendations from many of the government's advisory councils to make schools and religious education better tailored to the changes in Quebec society. Behind the government decision to secularize education was the desire to

Religion in the Quebec Public School System

A Change for Equality and Diversity

federated provinces, made the same request (Lamonde, 2000: 351). The addition of Section 93 to the *British North America Act* (BNA) was specifically designed to protect the Catholic and Protestant school administrations of these provinces in regions where these groups were in the minority.

make the school a place that welcomes diversity and respects the principle that all citizens are equal.

The Need to Rethink the Secular School System

The confessional school system's lack of legitimacy can be explained by a number of changes that marked Quebec society, which were evoked in the Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education as early as 1963. The report, which recommended the creation of the Ministry of Education (1964), stated the need to take into account "Québec's now pluralistic nature, from a religious standpoint, [...] parents who do not or no longer share the Catholic or Protestant faith or who do not belong to any religion" [free translation] (Vol. 4, section 100). The system granted specific rights only to two denominations: Catholics and Protestants. The report recommended opening a non-confessional sector where numbers warranted. This recommendation was never put into practice and was unworkable, since it would have assumed that people belonging to a given minority denomination were concentrated in a common geographic area.

Disputed since the 1960s, this scheme appeared to be even more problematic with the proclamation of the *Quebec*

Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (1975). A striking illustration of this clash between confessionalism in education and the respect of fundamental rights lay in the government's need to resort to the *override provisions* in the Canadian and Quebec human rights charters. These derogations were necessary to maintain the legality of confessional education and keep it safe from possible legal challenges based on the system's discriminatory aspect.

After thirty some years of heated debate on the place of religion in schools, the system was officially called into question by government inquiry commissions. In 1996, the Commission for the Estates General on Education recommended 'unlocking' educational confessionality.

of society was also gaining more and more ground ... even in schools. In fact, to adapt to the evolving student population, teachers were increasingly reducing the content focused on faith, thereby secularizing the confessional aspect of education from within. The school system was increasingly clashing with Quebec's educational and integra-

tion policies, such as the *Policy Statement on Immigration and Integration* (Ministère des Communautés culturelles et de l'Immigration, 1991) and the *Policy on Educational Integration and Intercultural Education* (Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, 1998), two important texts clearly aimed at respecting equality and pluralism. As time went on, these sociological and legal mutations made maintaining a secular school system less and less credible.

Legislative Changes and Their Normative Arguments

After thirty some years of heated debate on the place of religion in schools, the system was officially called into question by government inquiry commissions. In 1996, the Commission for the Estates General on Education recommended "unlocking" educational confessionality, which had been locked in by Section 93 of the Canadian Constitution. Following extensive public consultation in which supporters of secularism and confessionalism confronted one another, the explicit recommendation in favour of secularization was based on the need to ensure "that all students can be taught the shared values that we as a society wish to embrace," and thus "continue the separation of Church and State" (Commission for the Estates General on Education, 1996, p. 55). In December 1997, the Parti Québécois government, supported by the other parties in the National Assembly, took steps with the Canadian government to have Section 93 of the *Constitution Act, 1867* amended. At the same time, a Task Force on the Place of Religion in Schools was set up by the Minister of

Education with a view to examining all aspects of the place of religion in schools, defining the relevant orientations and proposing means to implement them.

In its final report, *Religion in Secular Schools: A New Perspective for Quebec*, published in 1999, the Task Force formulated many recommendations, including that of secularizing the school system and replacing religious education with a religious culture program. These recommendations were based on a full recognition of fundamental rights (equality and freedom of conscience and religion) and the social landscape, marked by moral and religious secularization and pluralism (Task Force on the Place of Religion in Schools, 1999: 115-128). The report recommended the adoption of “open secularism”, that is, one that did not rule out recognition of religious realities in relation to respect for the freedom of conscience and religion of both those attending schools and those who teach in them.

The proposal to replace confessional teaching with a course on religious culture was compatible with the requirement for neutrality on the part of the state and with the schools’ socialization mission. In this regard, the justifications given revealed a notion of religious reality that considers it a fact of personal and social experience that must be taken into account in education. The excerpt below illustrates the normative direction of this important recommendation:

“The study of religion meets the four goals set for schools by the state with respect to adequate preparation for citizenship: it exposes students to cultural heritage as it relates to religion; it exposes students to a diversity of opinions likely to help them develop critical and independent moral judgment; it promotes the development of tolerance toward, or even better, appreciation for various world views, both religious and secular; finally, it introduces students to life in a society richer for the integration and appreciation of the heritage of different religions, namely the Christian traditions passed on by the first settlers and the various religious traditions of those who came to Quebec after them.” (Task Force, 1999: 203).

Openness to pluralism has therefore been formulated based on a logic of inclusion that is both geographical (attending the same public schools so as to no longer divide children according to their religious beliefs) and educational (teaching religious cultures so children are open minded about understanding others and about dialogue). On one hand, since one of the universal purposes of education is to promote human rights and to educate people about these rights, it is difficult to see how a school whose very structure contradicts these principles could urge

Openness to pluralism has therefore been formulated based on a logic of inclusion that is both geographical and educational.

children to respect them. Moreover, inquiries carried out by the Task Force (Milot and Proulx, 1999) revealed that there was a broad social consensus in

favour of the equality of rights in relation to religion. Nevertheless, partisans of secularism and those in favour of the status quo faced off during a 1999 parliamentary commission on education. To the first group’s notion of open secularism, the second group opposed what it considered to be a par-

ent’s “right” to have schools educate their children according to their own religious beliefs. The political position of the Minister of Education consisted in not explicitly siding with either of these normative positions, but in managing them by, in a way, arbitrating between their divergent interests. This undoubtedly explains, in part at least, why the term *secularism* (laïcité) is never used to define the deconfessionalization process, appearing neither in the text of Bill 118 nor in the accompanying brief.¹ However, in the presentation speech for Bill 118, the Minister of Education explicitly rejected the communitarian approach, justifying this rejection by citing the dangers of ghettoization, prohibitive costs and the administrative difficulties that diversification and the extension of rights to different religious groups would entail. The Minister claimed to have taken a “pragmatic” approach that did not “seek to reconcile divergent viewpoints”.² The real challenge was

1 *Québec’s Public Schools: Responding to the Diversity of Moral and Religious Expectations*, gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l’Éducation, 2000.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

to overcome the polarization of competing demands: a demand to keep the option of confessional education in schools (Lefebvre, 2000), on the one hand, and on the other, the position that there is no place whatsoever for religious discourse in schools (MLQ, 1999). Faced with these tensions, the government decided to act on a step-by-step basis.

In 2000, the government made an initial transition phase possible by adopting the *Act to Amend Various Legislative Provisions Respecting Education as regards Confessional Matters* (Bill 118). All confessional school systems, from the Ministère de l'Éducation to the schools, were secularized. This bill put an end to the historical sharing of responsibility for education between church and state. Under Bill 118, only Catholic and Protestant religious education were kept. Given its hybrid nature, both confessional and secular, designed to reconcile competing expectations, the ambiguity of this compromise testified to its interim nature.

Bill 118 created an advisory committee, the Comité sur les affaires religieuses (Religious Affairs Committee). The committee's mandate was to track the evolution of Quebec society and to make recommendations to the government. After study and reflection, in 2004, the Comité sur les affaires religieuses published a brief entitled *Establishment of an Ethics and Religious Culture Program. Providing Future Direction for All Québec Youth*. It recommended drawing the necessary conclusions from schools' secular reality and argued that "new orientations are

needed [for these programs] in today's common and open secular schools." The committee recommended replacing confessional religious education with a common, mandatory ethics and religious culture program. The government decided to adopt this recommendation and to give schools the mandate to educate citizens who are open to society's moral and religious pluralism. This civic perspective of education enabled the Government of Quebec to stop resorting to the override clauses in the human rights charters to keep religious confessional education in public schools. Opposition proved to be less intense and some joined the trend toward accepting this new program. Three objectives represent the compromise that helped implement a compulsory course on religion, a task that so many societies have failed to accomplish.

The *Act to Amend Various Legislative Provisions Respecting Education as regards Confessional Matters* (Bill 95), adopted on June 15, 2005, replaced confessional religion classes (Catholic and Protestant) by a mandatory ethics and religious culture program in the fall of 2008. The orientations of this new program are clearly aimed at educating citizens and fostering a sense of community. In order to do so, the ethics and religious culture program has three objectives. First, to become familiar with Quebec's religious heritage, which includes Christian religions as well as Judaism and Native spirituality. Second, to

become open to religious diversity so students can be open-minded about diversity and its contribution to Quebec society. And third, for youth to be able to thoughtfully locate themselves in the landscape of beliefs (MELS, 2005 p. 10).

This educational outlook adopted by the government did not give rise to much debate in 2005, unlike what happened in 1999 with respect to the secularization of schools, presumably because mindsets had adapted to the school's new secular orientation. Even so, a "coalition for freedom of choice in education" was established to enable parents who wanted a choice the option of choosing between traditional confessional education and the new ethics and religious culture program. The latter was perceived as a threat to chil-

dren's religious identity (parents said they feared their children would be "mixed up" by being exposed to religious differences and "relativism" was seen as the outcome of this type of education on religious cultures).

These parents, few in numbers but highly militant, wanted their children exempted from the mandatory ethics and religious culture program in the name of freedom of conscience and religion and, in fact, they formed a protest movement (the Coalition for Freedom in Education). At the start of the 2008 school year, a few hundred parents demanded that their children be exempted from this program, but school administrations did not follow through on their

The orientations of this new program are clearly aimed at educating citizens and fostering a sense of community.

requests. The Minister of Education remained firm about the fact that the ethics and religious culture program would be mandatory for all students. The program involves knowledge and understanding of religions, so the freedom of conscience and religion argument does not, at first glance, appear relevant. It has not been shown that a program which simply aims for a better understanding of the Christian heritage and the heritage of other religions, without any confessional purpose that would impede freedom of conscience, can justify an exemption from this mandatory program. Another movement, the Quebec Secular Movement (MLQ), has also continued to criticize the new course, for other reasons. For the MLQ, religion must strictly be confined to private life, it does not have a place in a secularized environment and that any discourse on religion requires some recognition of the obscurantism religion represents.

School and Religion: Democratically Compatible

The normative direction adopted by the Government of Quebec in this new program is undoubtedly part of a new civic paradigm. The accelerated transformation of Quebec's educational landscape between 1996 and 2008 reflects not only how educational priorities have evolved, but also appears to be a sociological indicator of Quebec society's relationship with fundamental rights and moral and religious pluralism. This normative change in favour of secularism therefore introduces a more inclusive notion of schooling, in which recognition of cultural and religious

diversity and respect for equality of individuals are the driving forces behind an education that prepares students for democratic life. Citizen participation in a democratic context assumes that citizens can orient and debate their ethical choices, drawing from their most profound moral and religious convictions, which can diverge from or even contradict each other. Education therefore has a role to play in developing "virtues" or attitudes among youth which foster peaceful deliberation and tolerance: recognition of the diversity of world views, respect for differences, and the ability to think in terms of reciprocity, among others. There is also somewhat of a social consensus in Canada and Quebec (approximately 75%) in support of this type of religious education in schools (CRIC, 2004; Ouellet, 2005).

Conclusion: Secularism and Religious Symbols at School

Although the vast majority of Quebecers are in favour of this new relationship between schools and religions as regards education and the educational system, they seem more divided when it comes to expressing religious affiliation at school through specific symbols. The issue of reasonable religious accommodation has given rise to much debate within part of the population. Among others, the accommodation extended to a young Sikh to allow him to wear his kirpan at a public school (*Multani v. Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys*, 2006 SCC 6) had many saying that the majority had taken religion out of schools and that minority groups were bringing it

back in. The problem of religious accommodation initiated such a media storm that Jean Charest's government deemed it appropriate to create a "Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences" in March 2007. The media attention focused on reasonable accommodation or situations mistakenly associated with such accommodation was completely disproportionate to the situation on the ground. Although religious accommodations, under the principles of equality stated in the human rights charters, are not all related to school environments, accommodations granted in schools seems more of an irritant than other forms of accommodation. The wearing of religious symbols, particularly Islamic headscarves, is at the core of the debate. Must a secular school really accommodate the religious expression of those who attend it or work there?

An inaccurate yet persistent interpretation of secularism underlies this public dissatisfaction. For many citizens, secularism in schools should, according to the model adopted in France, apply not only to school regulations and educational programs, but also to people attending the institution, teachers and students alike. Yet, in Quebec and Canada, freedom of conscience and religion is directly linked to freedom of expression. It is especially difficult to understand how one could justify an ethics and religious culture program at schools, whose purpose is openness to diversity, while simultaneously prohibiting any expression of that diversity. 🌍

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Responding to Religious Diversity in a Multicultural Society: An Australian Example

Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs and Australian Multicultural Foundation in association with the World Conference of Religions for Peace, RMIT University and Monash University (2004), *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia: A Partnership under the Australian Government's Living In Harmony Initiative*.

Commissioned by Australia's federal government and published by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, this report examines the role of faith traditions and religious communities in a religiously and ethnically diverse country. The report notes that religion has always played an important role in the development of core social and moral Australian values.

However, a conscious effort is needed to maintain harmony between different religious and ethnic communities. This report is based on the notion that social capital,

both bonding and bridging, is essential to mutual acceptance among population groups and to the well-being of individuals and society in general. The report provides a historical perspective on the evolution of religious diversity in Australia, analyzes interfaith relationships, and discusses challenges arising from religious and ethnic diversity. It also recommends how an increasingly diverse Australia might continue to live in religious and ethnic harmony. Recommendations include, among others, 1) convening an annual multi-faith advisory forum to advise the government on interfaith and associated intercommunal affairs, 2) establishing an electronic directory of religious communities, 3) providing newly arrived religious leaders with English language training and in-depth orientation on Australia, 4) opening Parliament each day with a prayer from a different faith community, and 5) conducting further research to examine the place of religion in education.

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Historically, Christianity has held a privileged position in the Canadian military given its prominent place in Canadian society and the continual involvement of Christian clergy serving as military chaplains. Today however, while the majority of Canadian Forces' members continue to come primarily from Christian traditions, increasing immigration from countries with predominantly non-Christian religious traditions poses new challenges to some of the assumptions embedded in Canadian military culture and for the predominantly Christian chaplaincy. This new pluralism means there is an ever-increasing need for religious accommodation as well as ongoing struggles to overcome

religion in the Canadian Forces. The broader research was founded on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 32 Canadian Forces members (16 chaplains and 16 non-chaplains) from September 2004 to September 2007. This analysis provides insights into the challenges of working in a multi-faith environment and points to religious accommodation and integration in Canadian institutions as an area for further policy research, because of the potential for religious differences to be a source of conflict, misunderstanding, and discrimination.

A Christian Chaplaincy in a Multifaith Environment

As noted elsewhere in this issue, although the ethno-religious pluralism of Canadian society is still somewhat limited, it is increasing rapidly both in the general population and within the Canadian Forces. Although the Canadian Forces does not compile statistics on the religious identity of its members, interviews with unit commanders and personnel from these areas suggest this is most true of reserve units based in large urban centres, such as Vancouver, Montréal, and Toronto where immigrant populations tend to be most concentrated (Jedwab, 2004). For example, one reservist from the Toronto area indicated his unit included Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Zoroastrians, Pagans, and practitioners of Aboriginal religions. A chaplain from Montréal said her unit included Asian, African, South American, and Eastern European members including Muslims, Christians, Jews, Sikhs, and "no religion" (Benham Rennick, 2006).

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traditional structures and customs that exclude members from non-Christian traditions.

This article examines some challenges posed to the military by the growing religious diversity of Canadian society based on the findings from a qualitative research project examining the role of

The reserves currently involve about 25,000 personnel and make up about 36 percent of the total forces (i.e. all ranks and services); according to the Department of National Defence (DND, 2007a) “in the past, up to 40 per cent of all peacekeepers have been reservists.” The participation of reserve units, particularly those from large urban centres, on Canadian military operations is very likely to increase the religious diversity within a unit during a deployment.

Consequently, whether on base or on deployment, Christian chaplains are more likely to encounter personnel who have been raised in a non-Christian faith tradition. The military has attempted to adapt to the situation in a number of ways. For example, it has adopted an official policy that chaplains are to minister to members of all religions to the best of their ability and in as open-minded a fashion as possible (DND, 2003). Further, public rituals, such as Remembrance Day services, are to be as inclusive as possible and, in recent events, such as the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the ceremony of the Consecration of the Colours at the Royal Military College in Kingston, the Chaplain General invited members of the Buddhist, Hindu, First Nations, Jewish, and Muslim communities to participate as guests (DND, 2001a, 2007b; Gorniak, 2001).

Despite policies to ensure religious accommodation and inclusivity, Christian chaplains face real difficulties serving believers from other faith traditions. Padre Kevin Dingwell exemplified this struggle in his description of trying to meet the spiritual needs of civilians and

personnel while posted in Bosnia at the time of the attacks of September 11, 2001. He said:

[T]he first person to seek out spiritual support [regarding the terrorist attack]... [was a devoted] Wiccan.... How could a Christian chaplain help another from a vastly different faith community struggle with the emotional and spiritual challenges of that moment?... [I] led a memorial service so that all within the camp, military and civilian, might have an opportunity to reflect and pray. Attending that service were about three hundred people of many religious backgrounds, including a large number of the locally engaged employees. Most, if not all, of these civilian employees were Muslim (Dingwell, 2004).

Today, all but two of the Canadian Forces' 320 regular and reserve force chaplains belong to Christian denominations. The Chaplain Branch bases its staffing needs on Canadian statistics on religion and attempts to recruit religious leaders who belong to the largest groups (Statistics Canada, 2003). In 2003, the first Muslim chaplain, Captain Suleyman Demiray, was inaugurated into the regular forces. In 2007, a reservist Orthodox Jewish rabbi joined (DND, 2007c; Galloway, 2007). No additional non-Christian chaplains have been inaugurated into the branch since 2007 although the branch continues to seek willing minority religious leaders to join.

Decisions about who may join the branch rest with the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chap-

laincy (ICCMC), a sub-committee of the Canadian Council of Churches, in collaboration with the Chaplain General (DND, 2001b). Although non-Christian religious leaders are invited to join the chaplain branch, the chaplaincy remains subject to the Canadian Council of Churches. Further, potential candidates from groups not recognized by the Canadian Council of Churches (e.g. pagans, Wiccans, and other such loosely affiliated religious groups and associations) are not eligible to serve as military chaplains (DND, 2001b: IX-2). The rationale for this exclusivity is to ensure adequate pastoral training and standard entry requirements for all chaplains. The inherent problem with this model is that it innately favours Christian clergy trained according to a Western pedagogical model and is likely to exclude Hindus, Aboriginal elders, pagans, and other religious traditions whose religious leaders typically are not trained in this way.

Religious Challenges to Institutional Policies and Military Culture

National Defence policies now mandate the accommodation of religious needs by allowing modifications to some of the hallmarks of conformity in the Canadian Forces: namely the uniform and regulations governing facial hair and length of hair for men (CFPSA, 2005). Aboriginal members are permitted to wear their hair longer than standard regulations permit, typically in one or two braids. Sikhs may wear turbans or other head coverings as long as they comply with safety regulations for helmet use. Orthodox Christians (or Jews, Muslims, and Sikhs) can wear beards as long as they

comply with safety regulations for operational or occupational equipment such as gas masks. Muslim women can wear a specially-designed, loose-fitting uniform that conforms to Islamic requirements for modesty. Further, military personnel are now able to get meals that accommodate religious dietary restrictions, they can take time for prayers, and slowly but surely, they are being provided with places to worship (CFPSA, 2005: A3).

A number of interfaith worship spaces have been created on bases across Canada either by modifying Christian chapels or building a separate worship space. In 2006, the Christian chapel at Canadian Forces Base Halifax was expanded to include a multifaith worship space called “the gathering place” that includes religious imagery, prayer space, and resources for worshippers from a variety of faith traditions. Leaders from Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Unitarian, Aboriginal, and Baha’i traditions participated in its dedication service (Gilmour, 2006). At the Royal Military College in Kingston, chaplains have responded to growing numbers of Muslim personnel by installing a curtain in the Christian chapel to create a Muslim prayer room. Further, the base chaplain arranged for the installation of footbaths in the washrooms to facilitate ablutions (Benham Rennick, 2006). In 2007, Canadian Forces Base Shilo in Manitoba erected the “The Faith Centre” beside their Christian chapel to accommodate the spiritual needs of non-Christians on the base (Power, 2007). An Aboriginal “Circle of Unity Lodge” housed within The Faith Centre offers

“sacred sweat-lodge ceremonies and workshops to CF members and their families” (Thiessen, 2006).

While the Canadian Forces are required by law to make religious accommodation for personnel and commanding officers are obligated to uphold those laws, personnel from minority religious traditions continue to face some difficulties in the conformist environment of the military, because their religious beliefs present them with “special needs” and because they are often visibly different from the white majority. For example, despite current policies, vegetarian Sikhs note that a vegetarian meal is not always available. Pagans wishing to celebrate solstice while on deployment cannot do so “sky clad” (i.e. naked) ostensibly for safety reasons (Canadian Press, 2007). And in some cases, those who request religious accommodation are subject to scrutiny to determine if their needs are genuine, as in the case of a Muslim convert who requested time off from duties for prayer and was interrogated by his senior officer to discover if he “really” needed to do so (Benham Rennick, 2006).

Long-standing traditions that are part of military culture present real challenges to minority personnel. Sikhs, for example, have a long cultural tradition of participation in the military that might make them more likely to pursue a Canadian Forces career. However, many Sikhs abstain from alcohol, a central component of fellowship and camaraderie in every Canadian regimental group. In a civilian setting, a Sikh’s decision not to drink alcohol might have little effect on fellowship between peers, but in the Canadian

Forces (as in the militaries of most Western countries) drinking is a significant component of military tradition. Similarly, an Aboriginal writing on the differences between military and Aboriginal culture notes that cultural differences can become frustrating barriers for career advancement and can be the source of misunderstanding between unit members. She gives the example that, “in Inuit culture, a woman must not look an older man in the eye, as this is being disrespectful. In the military, if you don’t look your supervisor in the eye, they think you have something to hide” (Bergeron, 2006). In these examples, religious restrictions coupled with visible differences of skin colour or dress code quickly identify minority personnel as outsiders in an environment where conformity and inclusion are paramount for success. Further, they invite opportunities for exclusion, discrimination, and harassment.

Conclusion

Some military analysts argue that establishing a distinct military culture is foundational for generating cohesion within a homogeneous group to produce an effective fighting force (English, 2004; Snider, 1999; Ulmer et al., 2000). Donna Winslow, an advisor to the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia argued that group cohesion can actually reinforce behaviours that conflict with official military policy, because personnel learn to “cover up” for one another to protect the group (Winslow, 1998: 345-367). As a result, one unfortunate effect of the homogenizing nature of military culture in Canada is that it can be both abusive

toward, and exclusive of, the very people the Canadian Forces seeks to incorporate, including women, Aboriginal people, and visible minorities. Policy makers must recognize and take steps to overcome the reality that religious identity has the potential to interfere with group cohesion and become a source of discrimination against minority members.

Canadian Forces policies and practices governing religious accommodation attest to the institutional willingness to prepare for a new era of diversity within the ranks. Nonetheless, Canadian Forces members who belong to religious traditions other than mainstream Christianity frequently must adapt their religious practices to fit in with military culture and duties, because their religious freedoms cannot always be guaranteed. The need for accommodation and policies that protect the rights of minority religious personnel will become increasingly important as diversity in the Forces increases due to efforts to attract and retain greater numbers of personnel from immigrant populations. Tensions will arise as military traditions continue to be challenged by those outside the historical Christian norm. The experiences of religious minorities in the Canadian Forces provide important insights into the potential struggles other Canadian institutions and broader society will face as religious diversity increases across Canada and points to a continuing need for policy research on the role and influence of religion in Canadian society. 🍁

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Introduction

In 2007, the Policy Research Initiative (PRI) conducted Canada-wide roundtable discussions on the country's approach to multicultural diversity. One issue identified for further research in the Canadian context was the implication of religious diversity for the design, implementation, and evaluation of public policies. Participants noted that while much of the debate on managing diversity centres on accommodating religious practices, decision makers and the public are often ill at ease in responding to these challenges.

Following the roundtables, the PRI, in collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), interviewed federal public

federal policymaking – and how. The interviewees came from departments and agencies responsible for a range of policy areas, including social, foreign affairs, and security policy, and included officials involved in policy development, and program delivery and evaluation. Participants were asked to draw on personal experience from working within the federal government as managers, researchers, and policy or program practitioners in responding to a series of questions. Interviews were not intended to be exhaustive or to be construed as a full-scale survey. Nonetheless, three common themes emerged.

- A broad consensus prevailed among policy and program practitioners that there is no need to adopt a distinct policy “lens” for dealing with religious diversity in Canada.
- Consideration of religious diversity in the design, implementation, and evaluation of public policies tends to be subsumed under the more general rubric of “culture.”
- Especially at the operational level, the extent to which federal departments take religious diversity into account in their policies and programs varies widely.

Reflecting Religious Diversity in Canadian Public Policy Perspectives from Federal Policy Practitioners

Adoption of a Distinct Religious Diversity “Lens”?

servants from a number of different departments and agencies in the National Capital Region over a five-month period (see text box on p. 45). The objective was to gather information from experienced federal public servants on the extent to which religion and religious diversity are addressed in

Participants agreed that Canada does not require a distinct religious diversity lens for designing, implementing, and evaluating policy. They argued that policy practitioners are already called upon to consider many distinct policy lenses (e.g. ethnicity, language, gender, regional, and economic differences).

Interviews were conducted over five months from April to September 2008. The PRI, in collaboration with DEAIT, interviewed 22 different public servants from 12 different departments and agencies in the National Capital Region.

In preparation for the interviews, the interviewers conducted background research into the departments and agencies to understand their mandates and policy goals.

Participants were asked a series of questions to determine the extent to which religious diversity was taken into account in their policy development and program implementation. During the interview process, no one interviewee was able to answer all the questions. Participants were nevertheless encouraged to elaborate on the components of the questions they felt able to answer. In addition, participants were asked to think beyond their current position and responsibilities, and draw on experiences in previous positions they held within the federal government.

Participants were asked the following questions:

- 1) Policy design and implementation often involves identifying and taking into account the different needs of Canadians.
 - a) Is the religious diversity of Canadians taken into account in the design and delivery of public services and programs offered by your department/agency? If so how?

- b) Have there been any changes made to existing public services offered by your department/agency (or are being considered) to address the needs of Canadians with particular religious beliefs or practices?

- Were these changes an internal departmental initiative or were they in response to external citizen requests?

- c) Which of the public services offered by your department currently face the greatest challenges in responding to the needs of Canadians with diverse religious beliefs and practices?

- 2) In recent years, many of the conflicts between religious beliefs and practices and the legislative/regulatory policies and public services offered by governments have been settled through the courts on a case-by-case basis.

- a) What alternative mechanisms for resolving (or preventing) such conflicts have been implemented (or are being considered) by your department/agency?
 - b) What are the greatest challenges facing your department in ensuring the resolution of such conflicts?
 - c) Should there be a national framework on religious diversity?

Participants felt that adding a further religious diversity lens could be inappropriate for two reasons.

- Religious diversity already received adequate attention as a component of broader “cultural” lenses (e.g. ethno-linguistic lenses).
- A religious diversity lens would be more time consuming and complicated to apply than other lenses, because one would not only have to

look at diversity between religions but also at the extensive diversity within religious communities, greatly compounding the complexity of the task.

While most participants were wary of adopting and applying a high-level discourse on religious diversity, the interviews nevertheless revealed that, in practice, such a lens was implicitly being applied to program development and

delivery in a number of cases. This lens was applied on a case-by-case basis when departments and agencies determined that the diversity of religious identities was likely to be a determining factor in achieving department goals and ensuring program success.

Overall, Canada’s legislation, judiciary, and democratic institutions were already seen to provide federal departments, managers, and employees with

the necessary guidance to provide appropriate services to Canadians, including those with diverse religious identities. This broad guidance allows departments to consider religious diversity in policy-making processes where it is determined to be material to the accomplishment of departmental mandates and policy objectives, and to adapt programs based on the religious and other needs of the clientele.

This approach has, however, translated into large variations among federal departments and agencies in the extent to which religious diversity is taken into account and acted upon. In particular, there was a clear difference between interviewees involved in policy development and those responsible for policy implementation. Those in policy development generally acknowledged their lack of understanding of religious differences. In contrast, many of those involved in operations (i.e. policy implementation) appeared more informed and saw themselves as being relatively well equipped to identify how particular religious beliefs and practices could impact program success and service delivery, and the means of addressing them through judicious adaptations.

In both cases, interviewees generally approved of what they saw as the flexibility of Canada's current approach to dealing with religious diversity through a combination of case-by-case policy

adaptations and the resolution of certain issues by the courts. While most interviewees did not focus on the role of the courts in the course of the interviews, some felt it was advisable to leave decisions on religious diversity to the courts.

Notwithstanding their awareness of growing religious diversity in Canada, policy practitioners' knowledge of different faiths and religious practices appeared quite limited

Subsuming Religious Diversity Under "Culture"?

All individuals interviewed acknowledged that Canada is a religiously diverse country. There was also a broad understanding among public servants that religious diversity within Canada's population had increased over time due, in large part, to immigration, and Canada will continue to see changes in the religious composition of its citizens in years to come.

Notwithstanding their awareness of growing religious diversity in Canada, policy practitioners' knowledge of different faiths and religious practices appeared quite limited. Participants were easily able to name major religions such as Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, Islam, and Sikhism, but were often unable to identify differences in specific spiritual beliefs, rituals, and practices among them. This extended to participants being unable to identify religious holidays, the significance of religious symbols, institutions, and self-governance practices within religious communities.

In contrast, participants could more readily identify and describe culture in terms of practices, rituals, food, language, and ethnicity. Religion was seen in most cases to be a component of one's broad cultural or ethnic rituals and traditions. Practitioners had difficulty identifying which customs and practices were specifically religious and which were more broadly cultural and determining what particular policy challenges may be posed by the former.

A Variety of Approaches to Religious Diversity at the Policy Design and Operational Levels

As noted above, religious diversity was acknowledged by all participants as a fact of the Canadian landscape, though the extent to which they were able to identify it as an important consideration in the design and implementation of Canadian public policy varied greatly.

Few Examples of Integrated Policy Design and Implementation

In particular, the interviews revealed few examples of structured institutional approaches to enable departments and agencies to deal with religious diversity "on the ground" and to reflect these practices in broader departmental or agency policies. The clearest example of a structured institutional approach to adapting policy to religious diversity was found in the multifaith chaplaincy at Corrections Canada. The chaplaincy provides a clear organizational structure for responding to the religious needs of inmates and their families across Canada.

The first response to requests for help from inmates or prison staff in ministering to their specific religious needs is at the level of the individual, that is, by the chaplain at an institution. If chaplains are unable to meet those needs by drawing on their own expertise and other information provided by the chaplaincy service, they are expected to consult the relevant local faith community, that is, going out into the faith community of the inmate in the vicinity of the prison to seek advice from its leaders.

When solutions cannot be found at the individual or local level, chaplains seek out advice from appropriate authorities at the regional/provincial level. If required, requests for guidance may be addressed to a national consultation board. Guidance given by the national board reflects consensus among its members, and is transmitted back down the chain of command, ensuring services are sensitive to the needs of religious inmates. In particular, the institutional structure established by the chaplaincy for responding to the religious needs of its clientele remains flexible enough to respond to different individual needs including among different adherents to the same faith.

While the chaplaincy has a strong institutional structure for ministering to the religious needs of inmates, similar institutional structures and consistency in responding to religious diversity were not found in other departments or agencies. At the organizational level, issues of religious diversity receive little or no emphasis in the organizational structure of most departments and agencies. Religious issues at the organi-

zational level most often arise in regards to managing staff and ensuring that non-discrimination policies are respected during staffing processes.

Variability in Adaptations at the Operational Level

At the operational level, religious diversity tends to be taken into account to ensure program success. In this case, participants explained that if religious diversity were not considered in program development and delivery, the goals of a program might not be achieved.

To ensure the success and effectiveness of programs, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), DFAIT, and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) all give significant consideration to the religious views of stakeholders and counterparts in their respective domains. Individuals from these departments appeared to have a greater understanding of the central role that religion and faith can play for certain individuals and communities; for their programs to be effective, they saw a need to acknowledge and respect the beliefs of individuals and the communities with which program personnel interact.

For example, departments and agencies have developed tools for their employees, such as providing calendars that mark religious holidays from many dif-

ferent religions to hiring or contracting resident experts on religion to provide advice to employees. These tools help departments and agencies to alter program providers, dates, times, and even the title under which a service is provided to ensure access. However, participants saw limits to program adaptations, noting in particular that it was important that such adaptations not violate the broader human rights principles that are widely shared across Canadian society.

Consistent with the pattern noted above, those involved in program operations appeared to have a greater ability than their policy colleagues to identify where and why adaptations to

Interviews revealed few examples of structured institutional approaches to enable departments and agencies to deal with religious diversity 'on the ground' and to reflect these practices in broader departmental or agency policies.

religious diversity were warranted. They also highlighted problems with continuity and training. Lessons learned and best practices for program development around specific needs of religious clients were not available. In addition, knowledge gained on the specific needs of these clienteles was often not readily accessible to help design or deliver new projects or programs.

Training

Religious orientation training for employees is most often provided directly by their department or agency; INAC, DFAIT, CIDA, and the Department of National Defence all provide religious sensitivity training to

assist employees in performing their functions both in Canada and internationally. In addition to the standard orientation training provided to employees, individuals are also able to request additional religious training if they so desire.

In general, religious orientation training for federal employees involves three elements.

- *Sensitize employees to the religious beliefs and practices of communities and people.* This includes teaching employees about religious beliefs, the significance of religious symbols, and the religious customs of various communities. For example, INAC provides new employees with a two-day sensitization training session that takes place within a First Nations community. This training allows new employees to learn about First Nations or Inuit culture, tradition, and beliefs.
- *Provide employees with the appropriate understanding of respect accorded to religious leaders and elders in a community.* This includes learning about the influence elders and religious leaders have on their communities in the decision-making process.
- *Provide employees with effective tools for working in different faith and religious settings.* This includes making employees aware of different reli-

gious holidays and effective communication strategies for conducting discussion forums and actively participating in communities.

In addition to general department-specific training on religious diversity

Compared to their colleagues in policy development, interviewees working at the operational level appeared to have a greater ability to explain where and why adaptations to religious diversity were warranted.

for federal employees, the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) provides training for managers to help them deal with religious differences in the workplace, based on giving general guidance and exploring specific adaptations through the use of case studies. For example, religious diversity issues are explicitly addressed as part of the CSPS's management course, *Diversity, Vision*

and Action. Course participants are given two case studies that a manager may confront. One provides an example of a team member whose personal religiosity is invasive and the second provides an example of a team member whose religiosity is not invasive. Managers are then asked to develop appropriate responses to each case.

While religious orientation training is provided within specific departments and agencies and through the CSPS, a number of interviewees expressed doubts as to the relevance of the religious orientation training available to them. Interviewees noted there was limited opportunity for feedback to their departments and agencies on the relevance of the training they received. In addition, managerial responses to

the religious needs of employees vary greatly depending on their individual knowledge of religion and comfort level in dealing with potential religious conflicts in their teams.

Conclusion

Over the course of the interviews, policy and program practitioners all acknowledged that religious diversity is present in Canadian society and that this diversity will continue to grow. However, the extent to which practitioners felt that religious diversity was an important or necessary lens to apply to federal policy development and implementation varied. While participants were generally wary of formally adopting a distinct religious diversity lens, it was clear that certain departments and agencies already implicitly apply such a lens on a case-by-case basis where they feel religious diversity considerations enhance the effectiveness of programs and policies.

Policy and program practitioners varied significantly in the extent to which they systematically took religious diversity into account in developing and implementing policy. Participants involved in policy development often noted these considerations were largely absent from their functions. In contrast, those involved with policy implementation at the operational level demonstrated a more developed understanding of the religious diversity among their stakeholders and of when and how this needed to be reflected in adaptations to better achieve policy objectives through effective programs. However, participants at the operational level also expressed concern over the likely loss of

institutional memory surrounding program adaptations made as the result of applying an informal religious diversity lens.

Based on these initial interviews, it may be useful to explore a number of questions in more detail.

- 1) Is the manner in which policy and program practitioners currently address religious diversity (i.e. on an informal ad hoc basis) likely to be appropriate in the wake of increasing religious diversity?
- 2) Is there a need to develop a more consistent approach to dealing with religious diversity (i.e. as an element potentially distinct from culture) in the development of policy as well as in its implementation?
- 3) What are the best practices in this regard, both within and outside the federal government? 🍌

The Principle of Secularism (Laïcité): France

Government of France (December 2003), *Commission de Réflexion sur L'application du Principe de Laïcité dans la République : Rapport au Président de la République*.

This report presents the findings of the Commission de réflexion sur l'application du principe de laïcité dans la République, chaired by Bernard Stasi. President Jacques Chirac established the commission in July 2003 to investigate how the principle of secularism should apply in practice within a country that has become more religiously diverse through immigration. While the report focuses on the wearing of religious attire in the public school system, it also comments on how secularism should apply in the public sphere, at work, and in the delivery of public services. To understand how it should apply in practice, the commission interviewed represen-

tatives from various groups, including religious and community leaders, teachers, equal rights promoters, and politicians.

Following this research, the commission reiterated that the French republic is a secular society and that conspicuous religious symbols should not be worn in the public school system. This led to the French law on applying the principle of secularism and on religious symbols in schools, which bans the wearing of conspicuous religious symbols in the country's public primary and secondary schools. While this principle was the most publicized element of the report, the commission made other recommendations, including declaring Yom Kippur and Eid as vacation days, banning conspicuous symbols of political affiliation, and finding ways to eliminate discriminatory practices.

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Introduction

This article describes the changing role and impact of religious identities on international relations. It shows how globalization is increasing the integrating and fragmenting effects of religious identities, changing how they play out on the world stage – notably through changes in the main religious actors (states, non-state actors, and diaspora communities) – and discusses their contributions to international conflict or co-operation. It also examines potential implications of these changing global demographic trends, as well as trends in religious identity (mainly in Islam and Christianity) for conflict, security, and development.

The “Levels of Analysis” and the Future International Politics of Religious Identity

“Levels of Analysis”

Some of the potential implications of demographic trends and trends in religious identity (described in “Global Trends in Religious Identity” on p. 14) for conflict, security, and development can be more clearly seen through the

“levels of analysis” framework, commonly used in the theory of international relations:

- First, the overarching **global** level picks up on the effects of economics, technology, and globalization on the religious resurgence.
- Second, the **inter-state** level (the level of analysis of the states in the international system, as international relations is conventionally understood) examines what these demographic trends might mean for diplomacy, statecraft, and the relations between states more generally.
- Finally, the ways in which these demographic trends may affect domestic religion, politics, and political stability are examined at the **state-and-society** level.

The Global Level of Analysis

The global level of analysis seeks to explain outcomes in international relations in terms of global natural, social, or technological forces that transcend the relations between states at the level of analysis of the international system. This level is becoming increasingly important because of the integrating and fragmenting effects of globalization on international relations.

Globalization is rapidly dissolving social and economic barriers in time and space, and thus the distance between states, transforming the world's diverse populations into a more integrated or homogeneous world: global markets, global travel, a global youth culture, and an age of global information (e.g. mobile phone pictures of police brutality in Egypt or vote-rigging

in Zimbabwe) (Osterhammel and Peterson, 2005). Globalization is also creating a more fragmented and heterogeneous world, facilitating more particular identities. On the one hand, globalization is making it easier for people of a similar identity to be aware of each other across time, space, and distance and to come together across the globe. On the other hand, it contributes to the ethnic, religious, and racial divisions that are fragmenting the political landscape into smaller and smaller units.

The global resurgence of religion is not about – or not only about – old, primordial fears and divisions, but also new ones, caused by the paradoxical interdependence of these social forces that are unifying and fragmenting the world at the same time.

However, what is happening is more complicated than this. The global and the local are becoming more closely linked together in a kind of “global particularity.” One example is “globalized Islam,” in which types of radical Islam around the world blur the connection between Islam, a specific society, and a specific territory. Another example is the transnational links between churches and denominations that make up global evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity. The global resurgence of religion is not about – or not only about – old, primordial fears and divisions, but also new ones, caused by the paradoxical interdependence of these social forces that are unifying and fragmenting the world at the same time (Beyer, 1994; Barber, 1995; Clark, 1997). Therefore, the

cause of conflict, or the potential for conflict, should be seen not as a result of the *existence* of religious diversity.

Rather, it should be seen as arising from the collapse, or the threat of the collapse, of diversity, resulting from the forces of globalization.

How does the global level of analysis help us understand the impact of the religious resurgence on security and conflict? First, globalization is rapidly changing what religion is, and so globalization is changing what constitutes religious actors or religious non-state actors in international relations. In other words, how globalization is changing religion (and how religion is also changing globalization) are key

aspects of the way social change influences international relations.

Ever since Samuel Huntington popularized the notion of the “clash of civilizations,” most accounts of religion in international relations have followed an analysis of the static and rather well-delineated blocs that ostensibly make up the main world religions and civilizations: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. However, this assumes stability in the global religious landscape, as well as a rather static approach to religious non-state actors

that is at odds with the reality of religion and religious change in the 21st century.

Second, the role of religion in international relations is constantly evolving. Rapid religious and social changes are taking place in the Islamic world, producing the various Islamic non-state actors mentioned in the newspapers every day (al-Qaeda, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, etc.). But there are a variety of other Islamic non-state actors that are not terrorist groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood (political movements that are particularly active in Egypt, Algeria, Jordan, Kuwait, Syria, and Sudan). The missionary organization Tablighi Jamaat (a society for the propagation of the Muslim faith) is probably the largest Islamic non-state actor in the world, and probably the most important single element in the Islamic global resurgence (Kepel, 1994). In other words, the more well-publicized Islamic terrorist groups are not the only (or necessarily even the most important) Islamic non-state actors in world politics.

Third, globalization is helping to create or expand ethnic and religious diaspora communities around the world. These are some of the most significant non-state actors in world politics in the 21st century. Religious diaspora communities contribute to the changing nature of conflict and co-operation, and they can complicate the problems of security and global terrorism. This is why in security and intelligence circles, the concept of a global “war on terrorism” is giving way to the wider notion of a struggle against “global Islamic insurgency” (Kilcullen, 2006).

Diaspora communities are not new. Long-existing examples include the Chinese, Jewish, and Armenian diasporas, as well as the Arab diaspora – mainly Syrian and Lebanese emigrants – who form communities in West Africa. These global-local links or networks do not just happen; they are not free-floating. They are social networks, embedded in religious diaspora communities that are also a key aspect of religious transnationalism. Thus, rather than be carried away by the idea that such social networking is one of the hallmarks of globalization and a significant new feature of international politics, one should remember that such social and information networks have been part of much of human history, and they predate the modern state system.¹

It is these kinds of global-local religious links or social networks that allow al-Qaeda and Hezbollah in Lebanon to do illicit fundraising and money laundering in East, Central, and West Africa (IISS, 2003/4: 289, 293). Similarly, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and Liberia have become a concern because of their ability, until recent political changes, to contravene United Nations sanctions on conflict diamonds (IISS, 2002/2003: 323). In Nigeria's northern

states, for example, criminal syndicates and radical Islamist groups have been able to come together (IISS, 2006: 251). Al-Qaeda can flourish through

local, almost subcontracted, religious extremists, such as Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines and Jemaah Islamiah in Indonesia. Radical clerics, trained in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, or elsewhere, have sought asylum in Europe or North America, where they can now spread their more radical, extremist forms of Islam in the West.

Unfortunately, globalization has blurred the lines between religious organizations involved in social welfare and those involved in terrorism. If Islamic social welfare organizations in the West or throughout the Islamic world collect

money for Palestine, then Hamas or Hezbollah may use the funds for terrorism.

However, we have been here before, or at least the French have. The way these social networks work is not new, for this is how the Sufi brotherhoods in North Africa supported the Islamic resistance fighters against the French occupation in the late 19th century. The social and charitable networks, which may fund or recruit suicide bombers, also promote and maintain communities. One of the reasons Islam and Christianity

are growing in urban Africa, for example, is because of the social welfare services that such faith-based organizations provide. Given those countries' weak states, corruption, and crumbling social infrastructure, secular and faith-based development non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are a main source of education, social welfare, and health care in developing countries.

Globalization also enables (or even empowers) people in diaspora communities to create or participate in a variety of new types of global or transnational identities, offering new types of community and political action. There is nothing unusual about this. A variety of advocacy and pressure groups – Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and most development NGOs – rely on this kind of identification to get financial support.

However, globalization can enable people in diaspora communities to create or participate in new, radical forms of identity and political action. A key current example, already mentioned in this article, is what Olivier Roy calls “globalized Islam.” Among diaspora Muslim communities in the West, the revival of Islam may not be a backlash against modernization or Westernization, but a consequence of it. Young, rootless Muslims, living as a minority in Western societies, can become part of a “global Ummah” – a global Islamic majority, the global Muslim community – through videos, the Internet, and cheap air tickets (to places such as Pakistan). This can lead to new forms

1 Contrast Castells, 2000, with McNeill and McNeill, 2003.

of radicalism, ranging from support for al-Qaeda to rejection of social integration into Western societies (Roy, 2002).

Diaspora communities in which ethnicity and religion can facilitate new forms of identity exists in other religions as well. The (Hindu) Tamil diaspora funds and supports the civil war against Sri Lanka's (Buddhist-nationalist) Sinhalese-dominated government. The middle-class Indian diaspora in California's Silicon Valley has funded Hindu nationalist parties in India – the RSS and the BJP. In other words, religious diaspora communities – including those that constitute prominent religious minorities in Western countries – can play important roles in the international politics of ethnic conflicts and religious fundamentalism.

The Inter-State Level of Analysis

This level of analysis focuses on implications of global religious trends for the conduct of international relations. The concern here is on how religious identity may influence interstate relations in terms of likely allies, alliances, the ability of countries to influence others, and the impact religion may have on the likelihood and eventual intensity of conflicts. First, consider which 25 countries are likely to be the most populous by the mid-21st century (Table 1).

Second, consider again the 25 countries likely to be the most populous by the mid-21st century, but this time compare which ones will be predominately Christian and which predominately Muslim (Table 2). According to Jenkins, nine will be wholly or mainly Muslim and eight wholly or mainly Christian, with three deeply divided

TABLE 1
The Most Populous Countries in the World: Projections to 2025 and 2050 (population in millions)

Nation	1975	2000	2025	2050
1. India	622	1,014	1,277	1,620
2. China	918	1,262	1,464	1,471
3. United States	216	276	338	404
4. Indonesia	138	225	301	338
5. Nigeria	59	123	205	304
6. Pakistan	75	142	213	268
7. Brazil	109	173	201	206
8. Bangladesh	76	129	178	205
9. Ethiopia	33	64	115	188
10. Congo	25	52	105	182
11. Philippines	44	81	122	154
12. Mexico	61	100	134	153
13. Vietnam	48	79	106	119
14. Russia	134	146	136	118
15. Egypt	37	68	95	113
16. Japan	112	127	120	101
17. Iran	33	66	88	100
18. Saudi Arabia	7	22	48	91
19. Tanzania	16	35	60	88
20. Turkey	41	66	82	87
21. Sudan	16	35	61	84
22. Uganda	11	23	48	84
23. Germany	79	83	85	80
24. Yemen	7	17	40	71
25. Thailand	42	60	71	70

Source: Jenkins (2002), p. 84.

between the two religions (Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Tanzania). With the important exceptions of India and China, the future centres of global population are mainly in countries that are already divided between two of the great world religions: Christianity and Islam. He thus argues that state divisions and religious divisions may increasingly reinforce each other.

Does this matter? If it does, under what conditions does it matter? Jenkins says that these divisions are likely to intensify in the future: "In present-day battles in Africa and Asia, we may today be seeing the political outlines of the new century, and probably, the roots of future great power alliances" (Jenkins, 2002: 164).

However, before we can accept Jenkins's proposition regarding religion and alliance formation, we must understand far more about how culture and religion influence the construction of the collective identities of states and communities in a global era. It is widely agreed in the social sciences that any conception of the "self" can be worked out only in relation to an "other." Huntington offers a robust version of this general proposition: "We know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know whom we are *against*" (Huntington, 1996: 21; emphasis added). Others would accept the general self-other proposition regarding the construction of identity, but argue (in a more neutral vein) that such diversity is what societies and communities make of it: enemies, rivals, or friends (Wendt, 1999). What religious leaders and communities make of it given the global

pressures on their local communities depends on a set of factors – certainly their general interpretations of piety and religious ethics, and their political theology, but also the way globalization may be helping to shift the social, cultural, political, and economic influence of their respective communities in the states and societies to which they belong.

Jenkins collapses the more revivalist versions of these religious traditions with the *existence* of religious diversity. He seems to assume that the Crusades, an ugly phase in Christian-Muslim relations that took place in the Middle East, offers the *only* key to interpreting the collective identities of states or societies based on Islam and Christianity. In Mali, for example, young, reformist Muslim intellectuals, often trained in Pakistan or Saudi Arabia, have taken on leadership roles in new Islamic, community-based organ-

izations. They are intent on spreading what they considered to be a purer, less Malian form of Islam, disrupting the long history of these religious communities living together. Unfortunately, the intervention of the US Defence Department's Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorist Initiative has only encouraged the radical Islamists and exacerbated religious tensions (Gutelius, 2006: 38-39).

Culture or religion is often not very useful in prediction of allies or alliance formation. It is as easy to think of exceptions (most recently, the West's support – against Orthodox Serbia – for Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo) as it is of examples that correspond to a faith-based alignment of interests (e.g. Orthodox states did oppose the bombing of Serbia, and Germany was pressured by domestic Catholics to recognize diplomatically Catholic Croatia's break away from Yugoslavia). Historically, Venice traded with the Ottomans, but it finally joined the princes of Christendom to defeat the Ottomans in the Battle of Lepanto (in 1517).

Nevertheless, it is probably reasonable to conclude that the religious demographics of states constitute potential flashpoints for interstate conflict, and (crucially) that a country's own debates over culture, religion, and politics (that is, what determines a state's collective identity) do tend to lead a country to frame its national interests in a way that influences its foreign policy orientation.

Third, another aspect of how religion may influence foreign policy and interstate relations relates to the spread of

TABLE 2
The Religious Balance of Power among the Most-populous Countries in the 21st Century

1. <i>Overwhelmingly Muslim</i>	Pakistan	Bangladesh	Saudi Arabia	Turkey	Iran	Yemen
2. <i>Mainly Muslim, with significant Christian minorities</i>	Indonesia	Egypt	Sudan			
3. <i>Overwhelmingly Christian</i>	United States	Brazil	Mexico	Russia		
4. <i>Mainly Christian, with significant Muslim minorities</i>	Philippines	Congo (the former Zaire)	Germany	Uganda		
5. <i>Christian and Muslim, neither with a strong majority</i>	Nigeria	Ethiopia	Tanzania			
6. <i>Other nations, dominated by neither Christianity nor Islam</i>	India	China	Vietnam	Thailand	Japan	

Source: Jenkins (2002), p. 167.

Pentecostalism. Some of the countries with the largest number of Pentecostals – Brazil, India, and China (see Thomas on p. 14) – feature prominently in the thesis that Brazil, Russia, India, and China (“BRIC”) will be the great powers of the future, since their economies are rapidly developing, and by 2050 they could eclipse most of the currently richest countries of the world. Another article in this issue points out that Pentecostalism is at the cutting edge of Christian growth in East Asia, in what Jenkins sees as a potential future “Christian arc” above Indonesia (see Thomas on p. 14). Each of these BRIC countries is likely to become a leading regional power. Thus, for example, in East and Southeast Asia there may be more significant religious dimensions to the politics of regionalism and regional integration in the future – developments that could also affect their relations with other great powers and Western countries generally.

Fourth, what has been stressed so far at this level of analysis are the ways religious minorities, religious diversity, and religious transnationalism can become sources of religious conflict and pose challenges to international security. However, they also offer new, untapped resources for diplomacy and international co-operation. The section on the global level of analysis examined how globalization has helped link the global and the local, facilitating new identities and reinforcing old ones, connecting people to a variety of types of ethnic and religious diaspora communities. Multi-track and faith-based diplomacy make use of the changing global, social, and religious context of world politics to promote dialogue, conflict resolution, and peace-building.

Multi-track diplomacy refers to the informal, civil society, or non-governmental contacts between states and societies that involve private citizens, religious groups, the business community, and a wide range of non-state actors. Faith-based diplomacy recognizes that if religion is a part of the problem of international conflict, it also needs to be a part of the solution. It is with this wider conception of diplomacy that a country’s ethnic or religious minorities, through their global social and commercial links to their wider diaspora communities, could become an effective resource for the foreign policy of Western countries. This is not only good for social cohesion at home in the West, in which members of these communities are now more clearly seen as an asset in a variety of ways, but it also means they can help their adopted country achieve its goals in foreign policy: supporting trade, investment, human rights, gender equality, religious freedom, etc.

The State-and-Society Level of Analysis

At the state-and-society level, identity politics (structured around an increasing diversity of religious identities) is posing new threats to security, and it is playing an increasing role in influencing both domestic and foreign policies.

First, globalization has complicated multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-faith relations in the West on a host of social policy issues, because these *domestic* communities are increasingly

part of *global* religious diaspora communities. Because of globalization, multi-faith relations can no longer be conceived as single-country problems within the domestic policy discourses of “race relations,” “minority rights,” or “multiculturalism.”

Social groups that are sometimes identified in terms of race, ethnicity, and religion often have overlapping identities. Members of religious minority groups (such as Canada’s Sikh community, Muslim Algerians or Moroccans in France, and the mainly Christian Chinese

minorities in Malaysia or Indonesia) often have broader social identities facilitated by globalization and may be said to form part of transnational religious diaspora communities.

Therefore, globalization has made multi-faith relations one of the new types of “intermestic issues” in international relations (that is, issues that symbolize the merger of international and domestic politics) (Manning, 1979: 308-324). The *domestic* Danish cartoon incident of 2005, for example, was transmitted and amplified throughout a *global* Islamic subculture, stoking violent clashes in places far from Denmark, including between Muslims and Christians across the northern states of Nigeria where Sharia law is practised (IISS, 2006: 251). Politically, local Islamic extremists in many countries were able to use the global knowledge about the cartoons to bolster their Islamic credentials.

Faith-based diplomacy recognizes that if religion is a part of the problem of international conflict, it also needs to be a part of the solution.

TABLE 3
"Torn Countries": Christian-Muslim Tensions in a Globalizing World?
 (percentage of each of the world religions)

Country	Christianity	Islam	Hinduism	Judaism	Indigenous/ Other
Albania	30	70			
Bangladesh		83	16		
Benin	30	20			50
Bosnia and Herzegovina	46	40			14
Bulgaria	84	12			
Burkina Faso	10	50			
Burundi	67	10			
Cameroon	40	20			40
Central African Republic	50	15			35
Chad	35	51			14
Congo	50	2			48
Côte d'Ivoire	20-30	35-40			25-40
Cyprus	82	18			
Egypt	10	90			
Ethiopia	35-40	45-50			12
Ghana	63	16			21
India	2	13	81		2
Israel	2	16		77	
Indonesia	8	88	2		1
Kazakhstan	46	47			
Lebanon	39	60			
Liberia	40	20			40
Macedonia	32	17			
Malawi	80	13			4
Mauritius	32	17	48		
Nigeria	40	50			
Russia	15-22	10-15			
Sudan	5	70			25
Tanzania	30	35			35
Zanzibar		99			
Togo	29	20			51
Turkmenistan	9	89			2
Uganda	66	16			18
Uzbekistan	9	88			
Zambia	50-75	24-49*			1

*includes both Muslim and Hindu.

Source: CIA (2008).

Second, as a result of the global resurgence of religion (examined in Thomas p. 14), a number of societies are being embroiled in a kind of *Kulturkampf*, a cultural as well as theo-political struggle taking place over the *boundaries* of the sacred, the secular, and the political in their common life. This makes identity politics a part of their domestic politics (in addition to colouring their international relations). The first way this may occur is when adherents of one religious tradition seek to declare that nation X should be a Muslim or a Christian nation (such as Nigeria and Zambia) or a Buddhist nation (such as Sri Lanka and Thailand). Zambia's evangelical former president, Frederick Chiluba, for example, sought to gain favour with this growing constituency by declaring the country to be a Christian nation (in opposition to the mainline churches and the significant Muslim minority). Christian-Muslim tensions were exacerbated in Nigeria's decision to join the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Pressure exerted by monks in Thailand to have Buddhism recognized as the national religion has fuelled the Islamic insurgency in the predominately Muslim southern part of the country.

The second way religious identity may contribute to conflict is when countries have religiously divided populations, in which there is a narrow gap in power and numbers between two religions. It is in these "torn countries" (Table 3), as Jenkins calls them, that there have

already been intermittent or prolonged Muslim-Christian violence such as: Egypt, Sudan, Nigeria, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia. The narrow gap in religious power and numbers has also surprisingly erupted in more recent outbreaks of Muslim-Christian violence in Kenya, where such tensions have been intermittent, and in Côte d'Ivoire, where they were almost non-existent until recently.

According to Jenkins, the main potential flashpoints appear to be states with minorities representing 10 or 20 percent of the population, which is sufficient to resist policies to promote religious homogenization and enough to sustain military struggles against repressive governments. Alternatively, as Thomas (p. 14) pointed out in relation to India and Indonesia, the narrow religious gap may be located in particular regions of a country, even if one religion is predominant. Jenkins estimates that no less than 10 of the world's 25 largest states in 2050 could be divided by Islam and Christianity (i.e. the gap between these religious minorities could be between 10 and 20 percent). Given current trends, each one could be the scene of Christian-Muslim conflict.

Table 3 indicates how many *potentially* torn countries there are in the world (those in which there is a minority religious group that reaches Jenkins' flashpoint of 10 to 20 percent of the population). However, what is remarkable is that there isn't already greater Christian-Muslim conflict. Clearly, other factors have to be present before demography contributes to religious conflict. These include economic

inequality and religious persecution or discrimination. Connected to globalization, in addition, is the way the integrating, homogenizing aspects of globalization can threaten authentic development (that is, the development and modernization of these communities rooted in their own cultural and religious traditions rather than Western forms of modernization) (Fox, 2004). Thus, it is the way globalization can threaten the collapse of religious identity and provoke politically motivated religious discrimination, and not the existence of religious diversity, that contributes to conflict. Indonesia provides a counter-example: this Islamic democracy with a free press, a vibrant civil society, and an active Islamic feminist movement provides a model for a new type of Islamic modernization and development (Hefner, 2000: 20).

It must also be acknowledged that the potential for inter-confessional violence may be due not only to the relative size (in static terms) of each of the religious groups (beyond threshold levels of a gap of 10 to 20 percent between minorities). It may also be because of differential birth rates between religious minorities or (more sensitively) mass conversions associated with proselytization. So it may be reasonable for Jenkins to say that religious and political stability can be *potentially* threatened by differential birth rates and rates of population growth between com-

munities – say, the minority Shi'ites in Lebanon, who made up the traditional underclass, but whose birth rate is higher than the better-off Christian community. However, Lebanon's messy

politics, the cross-confessional military alliances, etc., certainly pose a challenge to any attempt to link politics, religion, and demography (Jenkins, 2002: 192-196).

Finally, future social conflicts within countries are likely to be influenced by social trends that can reinforce the particular kind of fragmentary cultural or religious identities facil-

itated by globalization. It is often argued that countries in the global South face a lot of social pressures arising from what are called "youth bulges," a large cohort of young adult males (between 16 and 30 years of age) that is supposed to contribute to social unrest, civil war, and terrorism. High youth bulges have been blamed for many of the Hindu-Muslim riots in India, the attraction to radical Islamic groups throughout the Islamic world, and the civil conflicts in West Africa, with their pervasive use of child soldiers. However, apart from male or gender stereotypes that youth-bulge theory builds on, whether or not youth bulges cause political instability or instead empower young people for social change and political action depends on a variety of other factors. Some of them are domestic, such as state repression, economic recession,

Thus, it is the way globalization can threaten the collapse of religious identity and provoke politically motivated religious discrimination, and not the existence of religious diversity, that contributes to conflict.

and simply bad, stifling, economic policy. Some are international, such as foreign aid policy, support for human rights, international law, international organizations, and the government's relations with foreign governments.

Conclusion

Religion is both dividing and connecting the world in new ways that pose new challenges for both global and domestic peace, security, and prosperity. Globalization has helped to link the global and the local in countries around the world, facilitating new identities and reinforcing old ones, including identities that span and connect different religious diaspora communities across the world. These global-local linkages and diaspora communities are transforming domestic policy debates over the nature of race relations, minority rights, and multi-faith relations. At the same time they provide new types of challenges to international security, since religious diaspora communities and ethnic or religious non-state actors – in a variety of religious traditions – have been able to pursue some of their political objectives through terrorism.

The challenge for governments in a global era is how to use religious diversity as a resource for their foreign policies. Faith-based and multi-track diplomacy, since they make use of civil society rather than merely links between governments, show how a country's ethnic and religious minorities can more actively contribute to their country's foreign policy. 🌍

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This article explores the role and place of religion in contemporary democratic societies, particularly in North American public and political life. We live in an age when many inside and outside of the academy are thinking and talking about religion — *specifically about what role, if any, religious discourse should play in the public space*. This article addresses this topic by proposing four models: 1) *Religion Over the Public Landscape* (in which religion is necessary for the health of public and political life); 2) *Religion Banned from the Public Landscape* (in which religion is kept out of public and political discourse); 3) *Public Landscape as Religious Space* (in which the health of society depends on a shared civil religion); and 4) *Public*

religious faith are significantly greater than those associated with welcoming them.

The article then applies this model to two practical issues: state-sponsored school prayer and government funding for faith-based services. Although these models are fashioned in the context of the author's political and cultural home (the United States), these models may be broadly applicable in other contexts.

Surveying Religious Discourse in Democracies: Four Landscapes

1) Religion Over the Public Landscape

According to this model, public professions of religious faith are necessary for the health of the public and political life in the United States and other modern democracies. They are necessary, because they inculcate virtues that sustain a vital citizenry. Such virtues might include justice, moral reasoning, and courage, or humility, hope, and love. According to this model, if religious faith and its concomitant virtues were excluded from public life, the moral health of the country would deteriorate.

This model is commonly associated with traditional conservative religious faiths, but forms of politically progressive faiths also belong to this model. Some argue that a robust democracy in the United States relies on the beliefs and practices of progressive forms of Christianity, Judaism, and now Islam. If a society fails to tap the religious impulse that nourishes and inspires the human spirit, then human rights, the

The Role and Place of Religious Discourse in Democratic Society

Landscape as Varied Topography (in which religious views are not initially treated as a special case, but rather are treated like any other more or less comprehensive view that may offer a voice in public and political debate).

The article argues that model four is best suited to democratic countries and that the risks associated with attempts to discourage public expressions of

protection of the marginalized, the protection of the environment, and the eradication of racism will not be expressed even as national aspirations, much less as future achievements.

This model usefully acknowledges the moral significance of religiosity in America's past and present, and it does not attempt to relegate religion to the private realm – rather, it invites it into the public and political landscape. Yet the placement of religion over the public is problematic, if what is meant by this is that the United States can reach its most profound moral and political goals *only if* religious beliefs and practices “watch over it” – i.e., if they guide and protect it, providing it vast and indispensable moral resources.

Moreover, there are compelling moral and social considerations that may persuade even *religious believers* to reject this model. It is one thing for an individual or community to bring a religious perspective to bear on a current, public topic such as the war in Iraq; it is another thing to make the global claim that the nation requires religion and, by implication, if fellow citizens are not religious, they do not have access to the most important moral resource. Though religious traditions offer rich and often distinctive moral resources that can enrich a nation's public discourse, they do not have a monopoly on such moral resources.

2) Religion Banned from the Public Landscape

According to this model, religion should be kept out of the political life – and even much of the public life – of

the United States. This model usually assumes that professions of religious faith are contentious and divisive unless they are rendered safe by being consigned to the private sphere: the sphere of the voluntary association, the family, or the individual. They must not be brought into the larger public or political sphere, because their partisan nature has great potential to introduce division and therefore conflict into the public life of the state.

Sequestering religious belief to the private sphere is the ideal held by most Rawlsian social contract liberals, including the late Richard Rorty. The idea is to keep religious discourse out of public, political debate on the grounds that: 1) religious beliefs are *not subject to public reasoning*, and 2) religion is therefore divisive.

Rorty championed what he called a “happy, Jeffersonian compromise” (Rorty, 1999: 169). The compromise is between the heirs of the Enlightenment and those professing religious views, and it consists of this: the religious may keep their religious beliefs, but only on the condition that they are willing to privatize them. Ponder this compromise for a while, and it soon becomes clear that it offers the following: *You may hold all the religious beliefs you want, so long as they remain irrelevant, or at least silent, to many things that matter most – for example, to public discussion and policy on the environment, energy, war, and social services.*

Rorty offers various justifications for this restrictive position on the place of religious views in public and political debate. For example, he claims that

“the main reason religion needs to be privatized is that, in political discussion with those outside the relevant religious community, it is a conversation-stopper” (Rorty, 1999: 171). By conversation-stopper, Rorty has in mind a person making a statement to which others have *no* response, presumably because they do not share the worldview that the statement entails.

Now, a democracy may for good reason want public interlocutors to exhibit a wide range of virtues, including attentiveness, discretion, and sensitivity to audience, as well as courage, honesty, and judgment. But these virtues and their corresponding vices do not run along religious versus non-religious lines. Moreover, a democracy cannot enforce such virtues, especially by stating in advance that all reference to religion be excluded.¹ Rorty could arguably have better advanced his aims by describing in detail the kind and quality of conversation he would like to see on public issues, rather than by attempting to rally “we atheists” to “enforce Jefferson's compromise” (Rorty, 1999: 169).

When Rorty argued that religion should be kept private, he meant, among other things, that churches, synagogues, and mosques should not speak to their members about public or political issues (Rorty, 2003: 148). Rather, religion should restrict itself to helping “individuals find meaning in their lives” and to serving “as a help to individuals in their times of trouble” (Rorty, 2003: 142). It is not clear, however, how religious communities can assist individuals with issues of

1 See Stout, pp. 85-86, for a discussion on democratic virtues in public speech.

meaning or in times of trouble and, at the same time, systematically avoid addressing public and political issues. Are religious communities to be mute on such issues as war, social security, and environmental policies? May not such issues connect profoundly with issues of meaning – especially during times of trouble?

Scholars of religion usually have little patience with Friedrich Schleiermacher's attempt to make a pact of non-aggression between religion and modernity by placing ethics, science, and religion each into its own discrete and protected sphere. Why should they be any more patient with Rorty's similar act of segregation for the sake of keeping religion out of public and political life?

Early in his career, Rawls seemed to share Rorty's wish that religion stay out of public life. But later, in *Political Liberalism*, Rawls opposed the public exchange of religious arguments only when addressing "constitutional essentials and questions of basic justice." Nonetheless, in either the more or less restrictive case, citizens whose outlooks are informed by religion would, under this view, still be required to refrain from making reference to this profound aspect of their identity when engaging in significant political deliberation and debate.

This Rawlsian restriction on religious arguments is problematic for the following reasons:

- *Psychologically*, it is not clear that people can so neatly uncouple aspects of their identity.
- *Politically*, it is not clear that the public interest is well served when some citizens are expected to repress the real reasons behind their public stance and to invoke only the kinds of reasons that this Rawlsian view would permit.²
- *Juridically*, it is not clear that a pragmatically useful and meaningful line can be drawn between "questions of basic justice" and all the other (lesser yet related) issues that pertain to questions of justice and the nature and arrangement of our public institutions.
- *Epistemologically*, it is not clear that what Rawls calls "public reason" can in fact be defended as "the reason of citizens"; that is, as an inclusive style of deliberation that can be said to be acceptable to all reasonable persons.

This epistemological doubt is intensified, not weakened, when Rawls, in the "Introduction to the Paperback Edition" of *Political Liberalism*, permits comprehensive religious doctrines to enter into public reason, provided that "in due course public reasons ... are

presented sufficient to support whatever the comprehensive doctrines are introduced to support" (Rawls, 1996: li-lii).³ This new concession is essentially offering this: *An argument wearing the cloth of religion may be permitted, provided that at some point the religious vestments are removed, thus allowing public reason to appear nakedly.* The only religious argument that can be permitted and trusted, then, is one that could initially have been stated in other terms – namely, in the terms of public reason. And yet this very idea of perfect translation between "non-public, religious reason" and "public reason" is precisely what gives pause.

The noble Enlightenment hope for public reason should perhaps be reformulated, not as Rawls's view that public reason should trump non-public reason, but as hope for a lively, rough-and-tumble, democratic political process of free and open exchange. This process of exchange – this alternative view of "*public reasoning*": the *public* (citizens) *reasoning* with each other – is not limited in advance by what all "might reasonably be expected to reasonably endorse" (Rawls, 1996: l).⁴ Rather, this process acknowledges that what is reasonable to endorse is itself debatable, and that some voices in the debate will not always be deemed reasonable by others in the debate. This unkempt process arguably goes to the

2 See Stout, p. 64, where he states, "I would encourage religiously committed citizens to make use of their basic freedoms by expressing their premises in as much depth and detail as they see fit when trading reasons with the rest of us on issues of concern to the body politic. If they are discouraged from speaking up this way, we will remain ignorant of the real reasons that many of our fellow citizens have for reaching some of the ethical and political conclusions they do."

3 For a fuller – and in my view, the most helpful – treatment of Rawls on religion and public reason, see Jeffrey Stout's *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 65-77.

4 This is not to suggest that Rawls would want to legally prohibit religious reasons from public debate; he, like Rorty, is offering an argument that he hopes will lead people to voluntarily adopt his approach. And while I disagree with Rawls's notion of public reason as it applies to most citizens, I do think that elected officials and judges should adopt something akin to it.

heart of a democracy that honours diversity, equality, and liberty of conscience. The test of the democratic process is not, ultimately, that it produce “the reasonable” – as Rawls understands it – but rather that it foster an inclusive and open exchange on matters of public significance.

3) Public Landscape as Religious Space

According to this model, the health of a society depends on a pervasive, shared civil religion: a set of morally charged, shared beliefs and practices pertaining to a nation’s history, founding documents, monuments, ideals, and so on. While a full-blown account of civil religion is beyond the scope of this article, this model directly pertains to our reflection on the place of religion in public. If the model has any plausibility at all, then it suggests that religion – now understood in a Durkheimian fashion; that is, religion as any set of shared beliefs and practices that morally unite a group – will *always* have a place in the public and political landscape.

This model brings a specific and useful complexity to the topic of religion and the public life. Those for and those against the profession of religious faith in public life often speak of religion as a clearly defined set of beliefs and practices. Boundaries between the “secular” and the “religious” seem plain and unambiguous. A merit of this third model is its refusal to accept this all-too-tidy border line. “Secular religion,” while an awkward expression, is not an oxymoron in this model.

Moreover, the model can easily acknowledge the various and often alloyed religious expressions made in

public. It can, for example, account for how Martin Luther King Jr. can seamlessly – and within the same sentence – evoke the sacredness of human rights (conjuring civil religion) and the dignity of all humans as made in the image of God (conjuring traditional theology). This model, then, would not only lead us to question facile, hard-and-fast distinctions between “secular” and “religious” and between “public reasoning” and “private reasoning,” but it would also bring attention to different *types* of religious expression in public.

The model is not without problems. *Conceptually*, it relies on a broad definition of religion, so broad that almost any significant public symbol, ritual, or principle could be considered religious. *Politically*, some fear that civil religion contributes to a form of national idolatry or that it sanctions, by sanctifying, nationalistic ideologies and aspirations. For the limited purposes of this article, however, this model adds some useful complexity to an otherwise simplistic discussion of the place of religion in the modern world and, specifically, of religion in the public life of democratic societies.

4) Public Landscape as Varied Topography

The name given to this model intentionally avoids a reference to the word “religion,” because this model *does not initially treat religion as a special case*. In this model, one does not decide in advance who may speak, or what kind of arguments one may offer, in public and political debate. A working assumption is that public voices will usually be varied in form and content. Some voices may be explicitly religious; others may

be explicitly non-religious or even anti-religious. But these distinctions do not matter, according to this model, because *no voice is treated as a special case*. Liberty of conscience and freedom of speech deem that *each voice* is a special case worthy of a hearing.

This model makes no predictions about whether acknowledging and accommodating a varied public topography is likely to produce more conflict or more harmony. In some instances it may lead to divisiveness, in others to accord. But, harmony, often a worthy aim, is not usually the most salient issue. More important is attention to open and inclusive conversation, debate, and participation in democratic institutions.

Now, after having noted in what ways religion should not be treated as a special case, this model goes on to acknowledge that, in some sense, religion *may* be a special subject in some societies (in light of their particular socio-historical circumstances). Given the history of religion in the United States, which includes both religious persecutions and religious revivals, Americans as a people tend to be both religious and wary of religious authority. There are highly charged issues that pertain to religion in the United States that would not merit consideration in other societies. Different societies have different histories and different concerns. In US society, the association of a belief or practice with religion may be enough for it to become controversial if it enters the public space of government or education. This is in part because Americans have learned some lessons of caution from their history of religion.

Adherents to each of the models sketched out above wrestle in one way or another with the issue of religion and conflict. And while each model has its merits, each also tends to make contestable assumptions about how to defuse possible conflict associated with religion: model three (in some versions) assumes the existence of a pervasive and comprehensive national civil religion; model two assumes the viability of stripping away citizens' religious identities in public and political debate; and model one assumes that traditional religion in the United States, if given free rein, will assure the moral flourishing of the nation.

While model four, *Public Landscape as Varied Topography*, does not seek to introduce unnecessary conflict and wishes to contribute to accord where needful, it does nonetheless focus more on honouring the First Amendment ("Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof") than on reducing social discord.

How, in practice, does this model support both clauses? Consider two examples of how model four translates into practical applications.

This model makes no predictions about whether acknowledging and accommodating a varied public topography is likely to produce more conflict or more harmony. In some instances it may lead to divisiveness, in others to accord. But, harmony, often a worthy aim, is not usually the most salient issue. More important is attention to open and inclusive conversation, debated, and participation in democratic institutions.

The model allows religious voices in public and political debate, while disallowing state funding and actions that promote any particular religion. The model, then, would largely support US Supreme Court decisions since the

1960s that have, on the one hand, prohibited state-sponsored school prayer and, on the other hand, allowed public schools to teach *about* religion – that is, to study religion as an academic subject. This distinction is crucial and reflects the spirit of model four: it prevents the state from promoting a particular religion, while permitting the state to host the study of, and thereby provide a forum on, religious diversity. Indeed, both acts – forbidding school-sponsored prayer and educating students about diverse religious traditions – work in concert as a powerful educational lesson, teaching students about living, working, playing, and debating in a pluralistic society. Studying diversity in this fashion is one of our best avenues to greater social understanding and tolerance on matters pertaining to religion.

Turning now to a different application of the model, consider the recent entry of evangelical Christians into public and political debate about climate

change and other environmental policies. Christian evangelical organizations grew increasingly critical of the former Bush administration's record on the environment. Increasing numbers of these conservative Christians are bringing to public debates about environmental policy distinctive theological arguments that refer to the goodness of the natural world and to the biblical obligation to protect all of creation – an obligation that for them entails political action. The Evangelical Environmental Network, for example, which is concerned about the relation between hurricanes, climate change, and the poor, can be expected to continue lobbying Congress to enact laws to stem global warming.

Model four would welcome expressions of these evangelical voices and their religious arguments addressing environmental policy in the public realm. It would not, however, permit government funding for evangelical groups to administer environmental programs, if these groups promote a distinctively theological point of view in the delivery of services. If recycling programs, mercury removal projects, or reduction of carbon emission programs were justified by appealing, for example, to the biblical obligation to care for the environment, they would be deemed an unconstitutional form of state sponsorship of religion. Model four would not prohibit all government funding for faith-based programs (some of such funding has much precedent that precedes the former Bush administration). But it would be vigilant in prohibiting funding to programs in which services delivered are entangled with a religious message or justification.

Although there is no detailed blueprint for how to apply the prohibition found in the First Amendment, its spirit is clear: Government is to refrain from explicit religious endorsement and from supporting religious proselytism. Historically, this prohibition has not automatically disallowed government from funding religious charitable organizations, providing that the delivery of services was free of proselytism and government endorsement.

Model four would not, however, support the former Bush administration's "Faith-Based and Community Initiatives," a multi-billion-dollar set of initiatives to aggressively woo and fund religious organizations to administer public social services in a way that makes many religious and non-religious citizens alike nervous about religion in government and government in religion. The Bush White House's publication "Partnering with the Federal Government," promised that if religious organizations receive government funding, they may invite their social service clients to their religious services and events. They may even conduct religious activities such as prayer in the presence of those whom they are serving: for example, offering prayers before a meal at a soup kitchen. Moreover, those offering the prayers, who are paid with taxpayers' dollars, may even be deemed qualified for their employment on the basis of their religious beliefs. The clients in these social service programs are often subjected to proselytizing, and the few prohibitions against proselytism that do exist are not enforced by the government.

Model four, then, would support faith-based, federally supported programs that vigorously prohibit all forms of proselytism and discrimination in hiring. Such support is consistent with the model's basic principle: to welcome religious voices in public and political life, while disallowing state funding and actions that promote religion.

Again, although reduction of conflict is not the chief goal of model four, it does seem reasonable to expect that acknowledging and honouring our differences in public and political arenas will lead to a more co-operative society. Welcoming the many and varied voices is not only the right thing to do – legally and morally – but it may also be the most strategic way to draw on a powerful yet still latent source of strength in pluralistic democratic societies: the vitality of their diversity.

Religion, Democracy, and Modernity: A Way Forward

While model four may be appropriate for the United States, as well as for other democratic societies, it will need to be adapted to each society's social and historical circumstances: its particular histories, institutions, struggles, ideals, and hopes. The province of Quebec, for example, which in the 1960s decisively moved away from a long-established model of society – a version of model one – that accorded significant political power to a particular faith (Roman Catholicism), may want to establish safeguards that prevent any particular religion from monopolizing political power, while at the same time developing venues and informal insti-

tutions that enable religious voices, including those of Roman Catholics, to express perspectives that pertain to the shared life of the greater society.

Whatever the nature of these adaptations, the presence of religion in modern societies makes clear the importance of wrestling with the ongoing, central democratic challenge of how to accommodate and respect – but not privilege – religious diversity in public space and in political deliberation. This article has argued that societies should not attempt to shield themselves from division and conflict by attempting (and probably failing) to keep religion out of public and political debate. While many will remain wary of hearing a significant (and possibly even rising) volume of religious discourse in the public space, the risks associated with attempts to suppress public expressions of religious faith are significantly greater than those associated with welcoming them. This goes to the heart of the promise of a dynamic democracy, in which diversity of perspective is brought to bear on common projects. ●

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Introduction

The advisory report entitled *Laïcité et diversité religieuse : l'approche québécoise* [Laicity and Religious Diversity: The Quebec Approach] originated in the specific context following the attacks of September 11, 2001. At that time, situations involving religious diversity produced strong reactions within Quebec society. Examples include a young Sikh's request to carry his kirpan at school and the expulsion of a student from a private school for wearing an Islamic veil. In addition, the government was going to have to decide whether or not to extend the override clause making it possible to provide

Catholic and Protestant religious education in public schools, which was set to expire in June 2005.²

This article goes back to the structure of that advisory report, summarizes its content and core recommendations, and positions it in relation to the events that have occurred since it was published.

Religions and States

Depending on the period, region, type of political regime, and forces present, the relationship between religions and States has taken different forms and features. During some periods, the two notions were in fact practically merged. For example, some sovereigns, such as the Pharaoh in Antiquity or the Inca in pre-Columbian America, were considered to be gods. In Europe, during the first centuries of Christianity, State and Church were intimately related, the king holding his authority by divine power. However, over history, the two forces began to distance themselves, through processes specific to each country.

Thus, today in the West, some countries affirm the separation of Church and State in their constitutions. This is particularly the case in France, but also in the United States, Mexico,

Laicity and Religious Diversity Still a Topical Issue

¹ In 2004, as a research officer employed by the *Conseil des relations interculturelles* (CRI) [Intercultural Relations Council], Ms. Therrien wrote the advisory report *Laïcité et diversité religieuse : l'approche québécoise** [Laicity and Religious Diversity: The Quebec Approach]. She is now performing similar duties at the Quebec Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities (MICC). This article, written in a personal capacity, does not reflect the views of the CRI or MICC.

The mission of the CRI, a research and consultation agency, is to advise the Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities on all issues relating to integration of immigrants and intercultural relations.

*Submitted to the Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities on March 26, 2004, the report is accessible on the CRI web site at <www.conseilinterculturel.gouv.qc.ca>. The original report is in French, but there is also a 43-page English summary on the web site.

² Bill 118 (*An Act to amend various legislative provisions respecting education as regards confessional matters*), adopted in 2000, repealed the confessional status of primary and secondary public schools but also allowed only Catholic and Protestant education to be maintained in Quebec public schools. Under the Charter, no religion should benefit from privileges inaccessible to other religions. Therefore, the government had to use an override clause to withdraw its law from the authority of the Charters. Since the federal Charter limits the duration of an override clause to 5 years, the government was to render another decision on the issue of religious education in schools in June 2005.

Portugal and Turkey. Others have a State religion (England, Denmark and Finland), while granting some recognition to other faiths. Some States (Belgium and the Netherlands) have adopted the so-called “pillar” system, in which some faiths are officially recognized and receive direct financial support from the State. Spain, after a period in which Catholicism was the State religion, recently recognized the Muslim religion.

Canada is a separate case, with the Constitution being practically silent on the relationship between State and religion even though for two centuries, two major religions have cohabited here with no significant confrontations. It should also be noted that, when the Constitution was repatriated in 1982, one reference to the supremacy of God did appear in its preamble, but that the Supreme Court has never made any reference to that in its judgments.

But what is the situation in Quebec?

Quebec and the Religious Dimension: A Changing Reality

The Place of Religion in Quebec: A Bit of History

Rooted in the North American continent and benefiting from both French heritage and a British influence, Quebec finds itself at the junction of several traditions which are very different with respect to Church-State relations. Thus, under the French regime, Jews and Protestants were forbidden entry into

New France. Following the Conquest in 1760, the British quickly recognized freedom of religion for Catholics, to prevent them from allying themselves with the Americans who were at war with England at that time. Thus, Catholics in the “Province of Quebec” were recognized to have rights which Catholics in Ireland did not enjoy at that time.

However, the Lower Canada Rebellion (known by French Canadians as the “Patriots’ Rebellion” - 1837), which was harshly repressed, and the signing of the Union Act between Upper and Lower Canada (1840) transformed relations between the colonial power and French Canadian society, and also between the clergy and the political elites which, starting at that time and for strategic reasons, would become strategic allies. From that time, French Canadians’ interests would become intimately tied to the interests of the Catholic clergy, for practically the whole following century.³

The situation did not change when the *British North America Act* was signed in 1867. After World War II, however, the Church's domination started to crumble. In the early 1960s, the Quiet Revolution took place, with the development of Quebec’s welfare state and

the nationalization of electricity. Cultural and social transformations occurred at the same time. There was an accelerated movement to laicize Church-run structures, with a redefinition of identity. Ethno-religious anchors to identity lost their relevance.

“French Canadians” disappeared, and were replaced by the “Québécois”, a name which gradually came to include men and women who, though not born in Quebec, have chosen to live there. Language and culture have become the paramount unifying elements and the poles of reference for identity.

Other major changes accompanied that transformation, particularly the National Assembly’s

adoption in 1975 of the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and the adoption in 1977 of the Charter of the French Language, making French the official language in Quebec and compelling immigrant children to go to French schools. The following years were thus marked, among other trends, by the promotion and expression of a culture of individual rights, the adjustment of Quebec institutions to ethno-cultural diversity and the ongoing laicization of Quebec society.

Rooted in the North American continent and benefiting from both French heritage and a British influence, Quebec finds itself at the junction of several traditions which are very different with respect to Church-State relations.

3 Quebec society in this period is often presented as being entirely dominated by an omnipotent Catholic Church able to impose its views on the political powers. The work of Milot instead tends to demonstrate that, although the Church did have unquestionable ideological weight, the State was able to preserve its rights, even against the will of religious authorities, particularly on the issue of women’s right to vote or civil marriage.

Laicity in Quebec

In Quebec, laicity appears with different characteristics than in France. There, laicity began with the Revolution in 1789, and was opposed to a clergy allied with the *Ancien Régime*, and aimed to start a new social order, whereas Quebec laicity was based on a well-established democratic tradition. In France, laicity is a value to be defended, whereas in Quebec, it is a practice which has not always been named. Therefore, an effort is necessary to specify the meanings given to certain concepts which are often used as synonyms, but which correspond to different realities.

Based on the work of Micheline Milot and Jean Baubérot (2002), the following definitions have been used:

- *Secularization* applies to a society's internal process whereby religion gradually loses its all-encompassing dimension under the influence of the other social phenomena (culture, the economy, etc.). Religion may remain relevant for individuals, but can no longer impose itself upon society as a whole.
- *Laicization* refers to the deliberate steps taken by the State to maintain neutral relations with religions and to prevent any direct interventions by religions in the management of the State. These elements are either formulated by means of constitutional provisions, by judicial decisions, or through common law.
- *Laicity* describes the result of the process of laicization. It can be defined as "a progressive development of social and political institu-

tions with respect to the diversity of the moral, religious and philosophical preferences of citizens. With this development, freedom of conscience and religion are guaranteed by a neutral State with respect to the different conceptions of the good life, on the basis of commonly shared values that make encounter and dialogue possible. [translation]" (Comité des affaires religieuses [Religious Affairs Committee], 2003: 21).

Thus, laicity can be viewed as:

- The independence of the State from religions, as well as the autonomy of religion from politics. In other words, religions do not directly exercise any political power and the State exercises no religious power, leaving the churches to freely organize themselves in the public domain.
- A principle which rests upon individual rights. Laicity is in fact a corollary of rights and freedoms. Individuals, as holders of beliefs and convictions, have the right, recognized by charters, to exercise their freedom of conscience and religion and to express them in the public domain. Laicity therefore imposes itself upon institutions so that individuals may be able to fully enjoy their rights and freedoms.

Laicity defined in this way is quite different from laicism, a doctrine which aims to remove religion, in all its manifestations, from the entire public sphere.

Religions in the Civic Sphere

The Legal Framework

In Quebec, freedom of religion is a right guaranteed by section 2a) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and section 3 of *Quebec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*. Freedom of religion is an individual right which is applied collectively through the right for members of the same religion to gather together and manifest their faith. Based on this stated and protected right, courts have given various judgments that have contributed to building the case law on which cases are henceforth evaluated.

The obligation of reasonable accommodation can be defined as "*the obligation to adapt the rule designed for a majority, for the purpose of meeting the specific needs of certain persons or of a group so that they will not be victims of discrimination because of characteristics which differentiate them from the majority. This requires making exceptions to some general rules or modifying them in such a manner as to accommodate special needs of certain groups or persons, in order to respect their right to equality.*" (Drapeau, 2001: 306).

Expressing freedom of religion, including through negotiation of a reasonable accommodation, cannot involve denying another a right protected by the Charter. In other words, one person may not assert a right if he/she thereby affects the right of another person.

The School Environment

Compared with other settings where religious diversity can exist, schools have certain specific features: it is not like a business confronted with a request from an employee or a client exercising his or her rights with full understanding of the case, but rather there are two third parties, namely, parents and educators, who, on both sides, wish to defend the child's rights.

In this context, parents are of course justified in exercising, on behalf of their child, the right to religious freedom. Seen from the educator's perspective, a request can also be seen as a religious constraint imposed on the child, whereas the school, by forbidding religious practices, provides room for the child's freedom (McAndrew, nd).

In fact, schools play a role as a pivot point between the private and public spheres and, in that capacity, they must be open to accommodations. Nowadays, the question to be asked is not so much "when" or "on what" to make an accommodation, as to decide "how far" and "how" to do it. Whatever may be said in the school sector, guidelines do exist and they are fairly clear. Thus, in school as elsewhere, an accommodation should not directly interfere with any of the stu-

dent's other rights or the rights of any other students nor, of course, should it impose any undue hardship upon the school with respect to its operation or budget. Solutions found must also comply with the *Public Education Act* and its regulations, which formulate rigorously stringent requirements intended for school managers and teachers.

The Health Care Sector

This is a sector in which interventions can be sensitive because they involve those particularly significant times in human lives: birth, suffering and death. However, the very nature of the interventions, which are personalized and

focused on the person's needs, creates a context favourable to negotiation and often allows conflict resolution on a case-by-case basis. In this sector, the issue of religious diversity does not seem to arise in a specific way: it is more perceived as a component of cultural diversity. However, the level of sensitivity of health care professionals is very variable. Thus, although some multi-ethnic settings have developed very broad expertise, others seem to only just be discovering this reality. Moreover, in places

where a sensitive approach had previously been developed in order to

respond to the reality of a numerically larger group (for instance, Italians in Saint-Léonard), the institutions are sometimes experiencing difficulties in transferring their expertise to people from the more recent waves of immigration.

In several hospitals, for example, chaplaincy services have adapted to the diversification of beliefs and Catholic priests are no longer the only ones bringing comfort to people who express a need for it. Similarly, efforts have been made so that places reserved for meditation are not directly associated with one particular faith and may be used by the believers of different religions.

Municipalities⁴

The diversification of religious practices (Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism) and the emergence of new Christian denominations (Baptists, Adventists, Pentecostalists) is creating an increasing demand for building places of worship, converting old churches or enlarging religious buildings. It is estimated that in 2002, of the 800 places of worship on the Island of Montréal, 35 percent belonged to ethnoreligious communities or groups.

The context of an increasing proliferation in places of worship is leading municipalities to fear a concentration of places of worship in residential neighbourhoods. The real estate market raises the issue of space sharing in a limited space where the proximity of a place of worship affects the market value of homes located in residential neighbourhoods.

⁴ Text from the research of M. Jézéquel, *Cadre d'analyse juridique en matière d'aménagement ou de reconversion des lieux de culte par les municipalités du Québec* [legal analytical framework for developing or converting places of worship by Quebec municipalities], conducted for the CRI.

Authorization to build a place of worship depends essentially upon the zoning bylaw authorizing certain uses in certain zones. In the absence of available sites for building a place of worship, petitioners may request a modification of the zoning bylaw from the municipal Council, who refer it to the consultative Zoning Committee for an opinion. In the 1990s, several municipalities “froze” their zoning bylaws in a wholly legal fashion in order to restrict the sites where places of worship may be set up. Other municipalities adopted a moratorium on places of worship. “*This change, which indeed protected the established churches, amounted in fact to a serious freeze put on the establishment of new places of worship, unless the petitioners made use of former Catholic churches (generally oversized when compared with the size of the new congregations).*” (Germain et al., 2003: 27).

Recommendations

Based on the elements developed in the previous sections, the CRI formulated 27 recommendations, several addressed to the government overall, others to the Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities and some, more specifically, to the Minister of Education, Leisure and Sport, to the Minister of Health and Social Services and to municipal authorities.

The following points summarize its recommendations of general application.

- Support reflection on a Quebec definition of laicity by initiating a dialogue with different religious groups, by supporting research and considering, as an outcome of these

discussions and studies, a government declaration on laicity in the Quebec context;

- Create and maintain contacts with the various religious groups present in Quebec;
- Replace denominational Catholic and Protestant education in the public schools with ethical and cultural education about religions;
- Ensure that difficulties experienced by recent immigrants trying to enter the job market, especially people originating from the Maghreb, be monitored and given special attention, in order to counter any form of discrimination based on religious affiliation;
- Ensure that practices for integrating new immigrants take better account of religious diversity, especially with respect to sensitizing and training those that assist in their integration;
- Update the part of the 1991 *Policy Statement* which deals with inter-community relations, to take into account changes in Quebec society and increase in religious diversity and to promote the exercise of citizenship based on living together;
- Examine the various practices followed in zoning places of worship to ensure that they not only take into account the urban development dimension, but also guarantee

that religious diversity is taken into account at the local and regional levels;

Hearings held throughout Quebec as part of the Commission's work showed to what extent issues of developing religious diversity can arouse passions and emotions, primarily because they touch on the concept of identity.

- Introduce greater flexibility for facilitating the installation of places of worship in mixed-zone spaces (i.e. sectors zoned concurrently as residential and commercial), rather than in areas specifically designated as residential zones;
- Sensitize employers to the competitive advantages that can accrue from hiring individuals who are ethnoculturally and religiously diverse;
- Encourage, in each ministry and agency, development of expertise necessary to support the adaptation and negotiation efforts of various service units in matters involving cultural and religious diversity; and
- Pursue sensitivity training of personnel at all levels and ensure that it take into account the religious diversity dimension.

Since the publication of the advisory report *Laïcité et diversité religieuse : l'approche québécoise*, some situations have experienced major changes. This is true in schools where, in accordance with the recommendations of several consultative bodies (Comité des affaires religieuses [Religious Affairs Committee], 2004), including the CRI, the

government decided to replace denominational Catholic and Protestant education in public schools with a religious culture and ethics course offered to students starting in the fall of 2008.

In October 2006, an Advisory Committee on Integration and Reasonable Accommodation in the Schools was established, with the mandate of proposing a strategy and relevant tools to the Minister of Education, Leisure and Sport. After the Committee's report was submitted in December 2007, the Minister announced "that she would act upon its recommendations and that a ministerial team would be put in place to support schools and school boards in the process, if needed. In addition, the Minister made a commitment to distribute a reference guide setting out the legal framework for reasonable accommodation and suggesting an appropriate decision-making process for handling requests."⁵ Training would also be made available to schools.

However, the debate around the reasonable accommodation issue, far from losing interest, intensified, and resulted in the creation of the *Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles* [Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences] in February 2007, chaired by Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor.

Hearings held throughout Quebec as part of the Commission's work showed to what extent issues of developing religious diversity can arouse passions and emotions, primarily because they

touch on the concept of identity. In its report submitted to the government on May 22, 2008⁶, the Commission raised several concerns: integration of immigrants, Quebec identity, interculturalism, French language, role of the media, etc. However, if one focuses on the place of religion in the public domain, as is the central intention of this article, it is noteworthy that several of the Commission's reflections were consistent with those of the CRI. For example, this is the case when it discusses the definition of open secularism (*laïcité ouverte*), guidelines for managing adjustment requests in public institutions, training for those delivering public programs, the fight against religious discrimination, and promoting efforts in the workplace.

Since Bouchard and Taylor published their conclusions, Quebec intellectuals have been confronting each other on the deeper significance of their report - what it says and what it does not say. What will the report's results be? The answer is still to come, but whatever its future, just like the CRI report, the Proulx report (1999) on schools and laicity or the work of the *Comité des affaires religieuses* [Religious Affairs Committee], it is already one more stone in the construction of a lay, open and inclusive society. ☺

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5 Press release dated December 6, 2007, <www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/ministere/info> (in French only).

6 To obtain a copy of the report (in French only): <www.accommodements.qc.ca>.

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Religious Diversity in Secular Societies: A Rising Challenge

Secular states and their underlying ideology of political secularism appear to have come under siege everywhere since the 1970s. They were severely jolted with the establishment of the first modern theocracy in 1979 in Iran. By the late 1980s, Islamic movements emerged in Egypt, Sudan, Algeria, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Chad, Senegal, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

Movements challenging secular states are hardly restricted to Muslim societies, however. Protestant movements decrying secularism have emerged in countries as widespread as

nationalists in the state of Punjab in India and among diasporic communities in Canada and Britain have also questioned the separation of state and religion.

Even the largely secular-humanist ethos of Western Europe has not remained untouched by this public challenge. This is evident in Germany and Britain but was dramatically highlighted by the headscarf issue in France and the murder of Theo Van Gogh in the Netherlands.

With rising levels of immigration from non-Western countries, globalization has thrown pre-Christian faiths, Christianity, and Islam together in Western public spaces. The cumulative result is an increasingly deep religious diversity that is historically unprecedented in the West, a weakening of the public monopoly of single religions, a rising tide of mutual suspicion and distrust, and (on occasion) outright hostility and conflict.

Mainstream Western Secularism: Part of the Problem?

Can Western secularism reinvigorate itself and deal with the new reality of multiple vibrant religions in public life or with the social tensions this can engender?

The dominant self-understanding of Western secularism is that it is a universal doctrine requiring the strict separation (i.e. the mutual exclusion) of church/religion and state, for the sake

Dealing with Religious Diversity

The Indian Model

Kenya, Guatemala, and the Philippines. Protestant fundamentalism has also become a force in American politics. Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists in Sri Lanka, Hindu nationalists in India, ultra-orthodox Jews in Israel, and Sikh

¹ A version of this paper is published (in English and French) in International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development. 2007. *Governing Diversity: Democratic Solutions in Multicultural Societies*, ed. Razmik Panossian, Bruce Berman, and Anne Linscott. Kingston and Montréal: Ethnicity & Democratic Governance and Rights & Democracy.

of individual liberty and equality (including religious liberty and equality).

The social context that gave this self-understanding urgency and significance was the fundamental problem

faced by modernizing

Western societies: the threat to liberty posed by a church (or competing churches) bent on hegemony – a threat to religious liberty conceived individualistically (the liberty of an individual to seek her or his own personal way to God, an individual's freedom of conscience)

and to liberty more generally as, ultimately, the foundation of common citizenship.

To overcome this problem, modernizing Western societies created or strengthened alternative centres of public power completely separate from their historically dominant churches. In some cases, the state forcefully extricated itself from a hegemonizing religion in the name of both religious liberty and liberty more generally. (Hence the anti-religious flavour of some secular states). Moreover, the break was typically a sharp one – a mutual exclusion (a wall, as Thomas Jefferson famously put it) between the two relevant institutions, one intrinsically and solely public, and the other expected to retreat into the private domain and remain there. The individualist underpinnings of this view are also fully evident.

Western secularism was not designed for societies with deep religious diversity and...has persistent difficulties coping with community-oriented religions.

This classic Western conception of secularism was designed to solve the internal problem of a single religion (Christianity) with different fiercely competing sects. It also appeared to rest on an active hostility to the public

role of religion and an obligatory, sometimes respectful indifference to whatever religion does within its own internal, private domain. As long as it remains private, the state is not meant to interfere.

It is now increasingly clear that this form of Western secularism was not designed for soci-

eties with deep religious diversity and that it has persistent difficulties coping with community-oriented religions, such as Roman Catholicism, Islam, and some forms of Hinduism and Sikhism that demand a public presence for themselves, particularly when they begin to cohabit the same society. This individualistic secularism is, in many ways, too parochial to have widespread acceptability and is increasingly being challenged outside Western societies as well as within them. In other words, Western secularism has become part of the problem.

Religion-Centred Alternatives to Secularism Offer No Solution

Is nothing redeemable in Western secularism? Should societies revert to a more religion-centred state that fuses with rather than separates from religion? Not if they value freedom and

equality. Historically such states, for example, the state that established the Anglican Church in England or the Catholic Church in Italy properly valued neither freedom nor equality. Such states recognized a particular version of the religion enunciated by that church as the official religion, compelled individuals to congregate in only that church, punished them for failing to profess its particular set of religious beliefs, levied taxes its support of the one particular church, and made instruction of its favoured interpretation of religion mandatory in educational institutions. In such cases, not only was there inequality between religions (notably between Christians and Jews) but also among churches of the same religion. As a result, such societies were frequently wracked by inter-religious or inter-denominational wars and actively persecuted their religious minorities.

The situation of states with such “established” religions has not changed much with time. In contemporary Pakistan, for instance, the virtual establishment of the dominant Sunni sect has led to the persecution of even Muslim minorities. For example, Ahmedis have been deemed non-Muslim and have been convicted for calling themselves Muslims or using the word “mosque” to designate their place of worship.

Israel suffers from the same problems. As a self-declared Jewish state, it cannot but exclude its own Arab citizens (let alone other Palestinians) from at least some of its scheme of rights and benefits. The privileged status of Orthodox Judaism also leads to effective discrimination against adherents of Judaism's reform and conservative offshoots.

Does this mean that all secular states are better than religion-centred states? No. Many such states (e.g. the British Raj in India and other colonial states) have historically separated themselves from religion to pursue power, wealth, or both more effectively and with few moral qualms. In opportunistically distancing themselves from all religions, these Machiavellian states fare equally poorly on an index of freedom and equality.

Standing in contrast to these “amoral” secular states are those that uphold freedom and equality, that is, value-based states in the mould of mainstream Western secularism. The problem, however, is that these are the very states that are said to be in crisis.

An Alternative Conception of Secularism: The Indian Model

Are there only two options to choose from: religion-centred, theocratic/pro-establishment states or purely individualistic, strict-separationist, Western secular states? Many non-Western societies have rejected secular states altogether and taken the first option. As Western societies become diverse, which way will they go? Will they become even more dogmatic in their assertions about their strict-separation secularism or, in view of changed circumstances, will they abandon it in favour of an unashamed embrace of some form of official establishment?

Or is there something that can get them out of this bind? Perhaps the problem lies with the implicit assumption that there is only one model of secularism: the one that emerged in the

West. But have other models of secularism evolved elsewhere that may be better able to address the new demands facing Western societies without giving up the values for which the original model was devised?

The Indian model of secularism may well be of interest in this regard. It is a model that cannot be understood as a doctrine or a theory, but is one that has been worked out jointly by Hindus, Muslims, and adherents of other religions in the subcontinent, and that can be glimpsed in the best moments of inter-communal practice in India, as well as in the country’s constitution, properly interpreted.

The model did not just grow out of the influence of colonial modernity in the first half of the 20th century, but had its own deeper historical antecedents tracing back to a well-documented religious heterodoxy as far back as Vedic times (in the second millennium BCE), through to the reshaping of Vedic Brahmanism under Buddhist and Jain influence from the middle of the first millennium BCE through to early medieval times (in the bhakti movements in sixth and seventh centuries CE), as well as the later arrival of Islam, and the emergence of Sikhism, all of which emphasized social equality (see text box on p. 76).

Seven features of the Indian model potentially lend themselves to broader application.

- Multiple religions are not extras, added on as an afterthought, but present at its starting point, as part of the societal foundation.
- It is not entirely averse to the public character of religions. Although the state is not identified with a particular religion or with religion more generally (there is no establishment of religion), there is official and therefore public recognition granted to its multiple religious communities.
- It has a commitment to multiple values of liberty and equality, not conceived narrowly as pertaining only to individuals but interpreted broadly to cover the relative autonomy of religious communities, as well as other more basic values such as peace and toleration between communities. (As such, the model is acutely sensitive to the potential within religions to sanction violence.)
- It does not erect a wall of separation between state and religion. There are boundaries, of course, but they are porous.

This allows the state to intervene in religious affairs in various ways: granting aid to educational institutions of religious communities on a non-preferential basis; or prohibiting socio-religious practices that deny equal dignity and status to members of their own religion or to those of others (e.g. the ban on untouchability and the obligation to allow

Perhaps the problem lies with the implicit assumption that there is only one model of secularism: the one that emerged in the West.

everyone, irrespective of caste, to enter Hindu temples, and actions to correct gender inequalities). In short, it interprets separation to mean not strict exclusion or strict neutrality but rather what could be called principled distance.

- There is no need to choose between active hostility or passive indifference, or between disrespectful hostility or respectful indifference. Societies can combine the two: the state may intervene to inhibit some practices, so long as it shows respect for other practices of the religious community by publicly lending support to them.
- By not fixing its commitment from the start exclusively to individual or community values or marking rigid boundaries between the public and private, India's constitutional secularism allows decisions on these matters to be taken within the open dynamics of democratic politics, albeit with basic constraints, such as the renunciation of violence and protection of basic human rights, including the right not to be disenfranchised.

- Its commitment to multiple values and principled distance means the state tries to balance different, ambiguous but equally important values. This makes its secular ideal more like a contextual, ethically sensitive, politically negotiated arrangement (which is what it really is), rather than a scientific doctrine conjured by ideologues and merely implemented by political agents.

In the interests of succinctness, a somewhat forced, formulaic articulation of Indian secularism could go something like this: The state must keep a principled distance from all public or private, individual-oriented or community-oriented religious institutions for the sake of the equally significant (and sometimes conflicting) values of peace, worldly prosperity, dignity, liberty, and

equality (in all their complicated individualistic and communitarian versions).

Discerning students of Western secularism may now begin to find something familiar in this ideal. But then, Indian secularism has not dropped fully formed from the sky. Over recent decades and centuries, it has shared a history with the West and, in part, has learned from and built on it. Indian secularism may be seen to be a route to

retrieving the rich history of Western secularism – one that has largely been forgotten, underemphasized, or frequently obscured by the formula of strict separation. If so, Western societies can find reflected in it a condensed version of their own history and a vision of their future.

But one can still object: Look at the state of the subcontinent! Look at India! How deeply divided it remains! How can success be claimed for the Indian version of secularism? The force of this objection should not be underestimated. The secular ideal in India is in periodic crisis and is deeply contested. Besides, at the best of times, it generates as many problems as it solves.

But it should not be forgotten that the modern, constitutionally secular state of India was set up despite the massacre and displacement of millions of people on ethno-religious grounds. It has survived in a context in which ethnic nationalism remains dominant throughout the world. As different religious cultures claim their place in societies across the world, India's development of secularism may offer the most peaceful, freedom-sensitive, and democratic way forward.

In particular, looking at the Indian experience it is important to keep in mind the following points.

- The state cannot avoid having or endorsing a policy toward religion or religious organizations. Religion plays an important part in the lives of many people and religious institutions inevitably interact with other (secular) institutions. So separation cannot mean the exclusion of religion from the public domain.

- Separation of church and state should also not be interpreted as strict neutrality. No state can possibly achieve the goal of absolute neutrality. It can neither help nor hinder all religions in the same manner and to the same degree.
- The state may interfere with religion – or refrain from such interference – depending entirely on which of these promotes the values of freedom and equality.
- Values of freedom and equality must be interpreted both as rights of individuals and, wherever required, as rights of communities. Community rights are particularly important if religious groups are vulnerable or, because of their small number, have relatively little power to influence the process of decision making.
- Secularism must be neither servile nor hostile to religion. It must manifest an attitude of neither blind deference nor indifference but of critical respect toward all religions.
- Secularism that professes principled distance and is sensitive to multiple values cannot avoid making contextual judgments. Contextual judgments allow for ethically sensitive balancing and compromise.
- Sensitivity to multiple values, the adoption of principled distance, and a commitment to contextual rea-

Secularism that professes principled distance and is sensitive to multiple values cannot avoid making contextual judgements. Contextual judgements allow for ethically sensitive balancing and compromise.

soning permit each society to work out its own conception of secularism and its own model of a secular state. Societies must recognize the need for multiple secularisms.

- Finally, those who think they are liberated from religion or believe their own system of belief is liberating – but not the beliefs of others – should accept, with humility, that none of their achievements are irreversible. They should also not fail to remember the history of oppressions within their own respective religious (and non-religious) traditions.
- As more and more societies become multi-religious, a sense of vulnerability of one's own religion, indeed of one's own world view will be crucial for a peaceful and just world order.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

India, by itself, is only one alternative model. This type of alternative version is likely embedded in the best practices of many states, including those Western states that are deeply enamoured by the ideology of mainstream Western secularism. And yet, the

Indian model may help to demonstrate several points.

- Western states need to improve understanding of their own secular practices just as Western secularism needs a better theoretical self-understanding.

- Canada should carefully examine the normative potential in its own well-honed practices of social and political accommodation as well as looking to the Indian variant of a model based on “muddling through” to workable solutions rather than getting stuck on an idealized model developed at a particular time in the history of its parent (or neighbouring) societies.
- Canada, like other Western societies, must devise a secularism that is less rooted in Christianity, less exclusively reliant on classical liberalism, and more openly sensitive to public- and community-oriented religions.
- There must be willingness to recognize the religious rights of communities. 🌍

A Short History of Religious Heterodoxy in India

India has what Amartya Sen has called a long tradition of heterodoxy, citing numerous passages even in India's oldest classical texts – the Vedas (which date back to the middle of the second millennium BCE) and other Sanskrit texts – that testify to extensive questioning by sceptics and even outright agnostics and atheists of religious orthodoxy and of the role and privileged position of the Brahmin caste.

The conceptual space for the idea of principled distance between rulers and the adherents of different religious traditions can be traced back to the reshaping of Vedic Brahmanism under Buddhist and Jain influence from the middle of the first millennium BCE onward.

Especially important was the development in India of Buddhism. For the Buddha, belief in a deity was far less important than human relations and right conduct toward one's family and wider community. Further, since the function of the state is to prevent the disintegration of the society – and since caste structures constituted a force for disintegration – early Buddhists saw it as the duty of the ruler to oppose them, making Indian Buddhism one of the earliest originators of a version of the idea of social equality, an equality that in principle (if not always in practice) extended to both men and women.

The Buddhist emperor Ashoka (third century BCE) codified rules for public discussion of religious views, emphasizing restraint and the need to honour sects other than one's own. Buddhism was also particularly important for the later influence it exercised in early medieval India (sixth and seventh centuries CE) on popular religious movements, creating background conditions for the development of Indian secularism.

The bhakti movements arose in the sixth and seventh centuries, particularly in southern India. For exponents of bhakti, what mattered ultimately was liberation from rebirth and from the miseries of this worldly existence. But unlike earlier forms of Hinduism and Buddhism, the

bhaktas believed that only the individual's devotion and faith in God could enable them to do so. Adherents decried all forms of rituals, undermining the position of Brahmins (whose self-understanding was that they alone could carry out necessary rituals) and eventually challenging the caste system. One particular bhakti movement, the Vir Shaivite movement founded by a Karnataka saint (Basava) in the 12th century went furthest, rejecting Vedic authority, the role of priests, all caste distinctions, and even the rite of cremation, favouring burial instead. More significantly, it attempted a radical restructuring in the role of women in south Indian society. It insisted on the equality of men and women, promoted the remarriage of widows, condemned child marriage as well as arranged marriages, and no longer classed women as polluted during menstruation.²

The arrival of Islam in India (starting in the eighth century) broadened the choice before individuals of teachers and deities. The confluence of bhakti and (Islamic) Sufi traditions also led to further innovations. These syncretic inventions deviated sharply from both orthodox Hinduism and Islam, just as they bypassed the conflict between the orthodoxies of the two faiths. Like bhakti, Sufism frequently asserted the freedom of the individual to experiment with Islamic religious truth, even if such experimentation entailed a deep questioning of the *sharia*. Nirguna bhakti was as sceptical of idolatry as were all forms of Islam.

The rejection of the caste system by radical bhakti movements paralleled the propagation of social and religious equality professed by Islam. Both popular Islam and popular Hinduism veered toward individual religious idiosyncrasy and the rejection of social institutions and their power, as exemplified in the 16th century teachings of Ramananda, who taught egalitarianism and accepted disciples regardless of caste. Kabir, one of his pupils, took his teacher's views in an even more radical direction, arguing that each devotee should seek God directly and

2 See, page 11 of Kenneth Jones' 1989 book *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*, published by Cambridge University Press.

envisioning a radically egalitarian social order. His views were endorsed by broad sections of society including peasants, artisans, and untouchables.

As the bhakti movement emphasized individual choice and a devotional path to God through the choice of an individual guru or *sant*, so the Sufis gave prominence to *pirs* and fakirs. Over time the very distinction between guru and *pir*, between *sant* and fakir began to break down and those who were initially brought up as Hindus and Muslims forsook formal boundaries to follow the more fluid teachings of the Shaktas, the bhakti saints, and the Sufis. Those who did not belong to the upper levels of society followed and fulfilled their religious needs through what Romila Thapar calls the guru-*pir* tradition. This tradition, which emphasized individual choice, dissent, social equality, the mundane welfare of the people and, by sustaining the fluidity of boundaries between clearly demarcated elite religions, taught toleration and a form of limited but sincere universal social ethic, was followed by a majority of the people of India. The extensive (though not always uniform) practice of different forms of toleration and respect for religious heterodoxy in subsequent centuries (including the era of modern Indian secularism) is believed to draw its conceptual resources from this tradition.

The 16th century Mughal (i.e. Muslim) emperor Akbar epitomized the tradition, abolishing the *jizya* (pilgrim tax on Hindus), forbidding forcible conversions to Islam,

removing restrictions on building temples, and appointing Hindus to high office. Echoing the religious councils organized by his Buddhist predecessor (Ashoka) two millennia earlier, he also organized religious discourses which were initially restricted to Muslims but after 1572 were opened to Hindus, Jains, Parsis, Christians, and even atheists – in sharp contrast to other parts of the world where religious bigotry and intolerance were rampant. (For example, 1572 also marked the St. Bartholomew's massacre in France.)

Akbar also developed and implemented the largely Sufi doctrine of *sulhikul*, under which all religions were equal, such that the festivals of all religious communities were to be publicly observed. This tradition of equal respect and impartiality by the state toward people of all religions was continued in the early period of British rule.

The coexistence over long periods of this great multiplicity of religious and non-religious world views and the impossibility or futility of one totally dominating or annihilating the other gave rise to a conceptual space which enabled the development of traditions of religious freedom. Not only were different faiths permitted to promote their teachings but also to build their own places of worship. As Max Weber put it, "religious and philosophical thinkers in India were able to enjoy nearly absolute freedom for long periods. Freedom of thought in ancient India has no parallel in the West before the recent age."³

3 See pp. 61-62 of *India as a Secular State* by Donald Eugene Smith, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1963.

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Introduction

In the wake of rising interest in issues of religious identity in Canada and other countries, this article summarizes research that prominent academics conducted between April 2007 and March 2008 with funding from the Multiculturalism Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada.¹

Religious identity is central to the lives of many individuals, and the intensity and public manifestation of those identities is increasing in many countries. Even predominantly secular societies must address challenges associated with growing religious diversity.

Significant public discourse on the place of religion in Canadian society has been going on for several decades.

A Survey of Recent Research on Religious Diversity and Implications for Multiculturalism Policy

What is new in recent years is that our long-standing approach to accommodating religious differences must adapt to the increasing religious diversity in Canada. Uncertainty over whether and how to adapt private and public

practice to this new reality has been evident in the significant attention that the media and the general public have paid to visible religious markers in clothing (e.g. head covers for Muslim women, turbans for Sikh men), faith-based arbitration, and incidents that have been perceived as signs of increased anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. Though Canada's religious minorities remain small, their continuing growth, coupled with increasing religious diversity, suggest that these issues will have a higher profile in the future.

Recent Research Efforts and Remaining Gaps

Despite the scarcity of basic information on religious identity and its relevance to public policy, interest in research on religious diversity – its potential effects and the policy responses to it – has increased over the last decade.

The question “What is this person's religion?” was last asked in the 2001 Census of Canada, and will next be asked in 2011. Statistics Canada asked some religious identity questions on more recent surveys (such as the General Social Survey), but the sample sizes of those adhering to minority faiths are too small to use in research. The 2002 post-census Ethnic Diversity Survey (Statistics Canada, 2002) has adequate minority counts but is dated: attitudes about religion may have been changing as we move away from the events of September 11, 2001. Thus, there is a gap in data on religious diversity and the intensity of religious identities.

1 The Multiculturalism Program was transferred from the Department of Canadian Heritage to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in October 2008.

Nevertheless, a number of efforts have been made in recent years to understand the realities and implications of the increasing range of religious identities in Canada.

In light of a growing number of controversies over both private and public accommodation of religious minorities across Canada (e.g. Islamic arbitration and public funding for religion-based schools in Ontario, and the incidents in Quebec that led to the creation of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission), round-table discussions suggest that a lack of religious literacy among decision makers and the public at large may be hampering identification of and effective response to situations that could compromise social cohesion.

Although the preamble to the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* lists religion as one of the fundamental characteristics of Canadian diversity, some have argued that the public discourse around multiculturalism and immigration, and perhaps citizenship more broadly, has overlooked the importance for many Canadians of religious identities (as distinct from other cultural identity markers, such as ethnicity and language) and the needs of religious communities (Biles and Ibrahim, 2005).

In February 2008, the Department of Canadian Heritage hosted a forum on religious diversity, attended by over a hundred experts and policy makers, at which several researchers presented

their findings. This forum was the culmination of the Multiculturalism and Human Rights Branch's efforts from 2006 to 2008 to take stock of the

demographic, social, and cultural challenges facing Canada. To generate discussion on the possible policy implications of the findings, the event showcased the Department's commissioned research on religious diversity. Drawing on this research, a special edition of *Canadian Diversity* magazine was devoted to religious diversity in Canada (Jedwab, 2008a and 2008b; Seljak 2008; Bramadat and Wortley

2008a; Dib, 2008; Delic, 2008).

This article summarizes the commissioned researchers' findings and the resulting policy implications. The following themes recur: religious radicalization, interactions of religious Canadians with an increasingly secular Canadian society, social capital within religious communities, and the challenges involved in integrating Muslim Canadians.

Religious Radicalization and Youth: Importation and Strain

Paul Bramadat and Scott Wortley researched youth radicalization in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism.

Although the 1985 Air India bombing gave Canadians an early indication of the potential security threats associated

with radicalism grounded (at least in part) in religious identity, it was not until the events of September 11, 2001, that such threats and the need to understand their causes acquired an acute urgency throughout North America and around the world. The new post-9/11 environment has focused attention on the intersection of race, ethnicity, and religious identity. Bramadat and Wortley point to the need to fill in the gaps in our understanding of this intersection and its implications for public policy – particularly regarding public security and multiculturalism.

They point out that although radicalization may be due to a variety of causes, in the current environment there may be a need to address the causes of exclusion and marginalization, since they may be contributing to anti-social behaviour and radicalization. Perhaps more than any other recent event, the 2005 terrorist bombings in London sharpened the focus on minority youth, since the perpetrators were young men who had been brought up in British culture. As well, during the summer of 2006, police arrested and charged 17 men in the Greater Toronto Area under Canada's anti-terrorism laws on suspicion of planning a series of major attacks in Ontario as part of an Islamic terrorist cell. A majority of the suspects were young: some in their teens and early 20s.

Such events have made the intersection of radicalism, youth, and religion a controversial matter of public discussion in Canada. Bramadat and Wortley argue there is a clear need to better understand the scope and nature of this as-yet under-researched intersec-

tion. A balanced exploration would require that religious youth radicalization be examined broadly, rather than focusing narrowly on Muslim youth. In addition, a preoccupation with national security can lead to perceptions of racial and religious profiling, which may undermine civil liberties and equality provisions for some minority ethnic or religious communities. Other research suggests that an effective multicultural approach could satisfy security needs by viewing factors contributing to anti-social behaviour and radicalization more widely as “social” security concerns. This would require working with communities and keeping in mind the social aspects, while factoring in respect for public liberties and human rights.

Bramadat and Wortley assert that of the five religions surveyed, none has proven historically to be more prone to violence than any other (Bramadat and Wortley, 2008a). Furthermore, by analyzing the content of 181 Canada-based religious web sites that target youth, they determined that only a small percentage (3.8%) of sites promote religious radicalization or violence (Bramadat and Wortley, 2008b).

Bramadat and Wortley also examine competing models in the analysis of religious youth radicalization: the

importation model and the strain model. According to the importation model, religious extremism or radicalization is “imported” into Western countries such as Canada, having been developed elsewhere. The strain model, on the other hand, evaluates religious radicalization according to the conditions immigrants and minorities face within host societies (Bramadat and Wortley, 2008a).

Although both models may apply to Canada, and given that one of the objectives of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* is to address the integration challenges that “individuals and communities of all origins” face, Bramadat and Wortley view the strain model as most relevant to multiculturalism policy and programming.

Based on the assumptions of the strain model, Bramadat and Wortley hypothesize that religious youth radicalization may be rooted in the experience of inequality, intolerance, and discrimination. They suggest that “perceptions of social injustice, along with associated feelings of anger, despair, and alienation may provide young people with the motivations/justifications they need to participate in both crime and religious extremism” (Bramadat and Wortley, 2008a).

Although the preamble to the Canadian Multiculturalism Act lists religion as one of the fundamental characteristics of Canadian diversity, some have argued that the public discourse around multiculturalism and immigration, and perhaps citizenship more broadly, has overlooked the importance for many Canadians of religious identities and the needs of religious communities.

If the assumptions of this model are correct, Bramadat and Wortley argue for an approach to combating radicalization based on adding a focus on religious discrimination to policies and programs designed to combat hatred and discrimination. A more holistic approach would incorporate goals in addition to dealing with discrimination: goals such as removing barriers to full social, economic, and political participation, and working with communities on the entrenchment of democratic values and the sense of belonging.

Interaction of Religious Canadians with an Increasingly Secular Canadian Society

David Seljak explored the theme of how religious Canadians interact with what is widely perceived as being an increasingly secular society. He explains that in recent years, our understanding of the relationship between the state and religious institutions and communities in Canada has been tested by events and public controversy pertaining to issues such as faith-based arbitration and school funding in Ontario, as well as reasonable accommodation in Quebec. During summer 2005, a public debate that was going in many directions over a proposal to let Ontario residents use Islamic law to settle family disputes according to the province’s existing arbitration legislation ended abruptly when the Ontario government announced plans to ban all faith-based arbitration in the province on the grounds that such a ban would clarify the boundaries between church and state. Subsequently, during the 2007 electoral campaign, the province’s

political parties crossed swords over proposals to extend public funding to Ontario's faith-based schools.

In 2008, the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences in Quebec suggested (in what is known as the Bouchard-Taylor report) that the province should define its approach to dealing with the needs of its religious communities, and particularly the distinction between secular institutions associated with "the state" and the rights of individuals to religious expression.

Seljak suggests a common factor linking these debates is confusion about the nature and parameters of secularism in a modern society, particularly the question of the appropriate relationship between religious beliefs and their expression in the public sphere. His recent work in this area, featured elsewhere in this issue, suggests this confusion may be due to poor understanding of the limits of secularism. This lack of understanding may be compounded by the influence of American secularism and a "myth of progress" that manifests itself in part as the popular belief that to become modern and advanced, a society must increasingly free itself of religious belief.

Seljak contends that the notion of the separation of church and state, a clear and precise "wall of separation" between these two institutions, is inaccurate as a description of the Canadian situation. Although Canada has become more secular its separation of political, economic, and social institutions from religious institutions, a majority of

Canadians still describe themselves as "Christian". As well, the number of non-Christian religious communities has increased since the 1970s.

Seljak concludes that any attribution of a clear separation between church and state to the evolution of Canadian government and society would be abstract, ahistorical, and therefore false (Seljak, 2008). He suggests that perpetuation of what he terms the myths of secularism and progress may inhibit the promotion of diversity and inclusion, which are among the goals of Canadian democratic participation and multiculturalism. In other words, ignoring the limits of secularism on the one hand and the increase in religious pluralism on the other may:

- mask the prevalence of typically ascribed Christian values in Canadian public culture and in institutional practices and structures;
- alienate large sectors of the Canadian population by refusing to acknowledge or respect the public elements of their religious traditions;
- ignore other claims made in the name of religion (for example, claims by Aboriginal peoples for access to certain lands in order to fulfill requirements of Aboriginal spirituality);

Seljak suggests a common factor linking these debates is confusion about the nature and parameters of secularism in a modern society, particularly the question of the appropriate relationship between religious beliefs and their expression in the public sphere.

- discourage contributions to Canadian society by faith-based institutions and organizations, such as schools, hospitals, and social service agencies, as well as cultural, sports, and charitable organizations;
- foster resistance to reasonable accommodation of religious differences, a human right that guarantees that a practice or policy that serves the majority does not discriminate against members of religious minority groups;
- encourage the creation of religious "ghettoes": closed ethno-religious communities that have relatively little connection to the rest of Canadian society; and

- prevent integration of ethno-religious newcomers (immigrants and refugees) by giving the Canadian state and society a public face that they see as foreign or hostile.²

Social Capital Within Religious Communities

Jedwab (2008a) argues that religious associations play an important, but overlooked, role in Canadian civil society—as important drivers of

the social capital that is generated within society. He argues that nearly half of North America's stock of social capital is religious or religiously affili-

2 This list of challenges is taken from Seljak, pp. 6-24.

TABLE 1
Importance Attached to Citizenship Values among Adherents of Different Religious Communities

	Percentage viewing the following citizenship values as "Very Important"			
	Help the Less Privileged Citizens in the Country	Understand Others' Opinions	Always Obey Laws	Be Active in Associations
Roman Catholic	74.6	68.3	85.0	34.2
Protestant	71.6	70.5	86.7	30.4
Jewish	87.6	72.3	82.8	42.6
Islam	71.5	51.2	80.5	51.2
Buddhist	68.7	55.8	79.2	33.0

Source: *International Social Survey Program and Carleton University Survey Centre (2004)*.

ated (as measured by indicators such as association memberships and philanthropy).

For example, between 1960 and 1990, Jedwab notes that spending by all levels of government on health, education, and social services grew rapidly, though direct delivery of many services remained in the hands of non-profit organizations. Religious congregations (local churches, temples, mosques, synagogues, and other places of worship) have responded to social needs arising in their communities, including those that may in part reflect reductions in government support. Of religious organizations that serve people directly, 73 percent primarily serve the general public (i.e. not just their own members). From the perspective of what is sometimes described as "good" social capital, he notes that only 27 percent of religious organizations say their members benefit most from their activities, while nearly 70 percent report that

both members and non-members benefit from their services. This compares to the 46 percent of all organizations (i.e. both religious and non-religious) where non-members report benefiting from the services provided.³

Canada has the second-largest non-profit sector in the world, according to the *Canadian Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector in Comparative Perspective*, which reports on the sector in 37 countries on the basis of size, scope, and donations. Among the registered religious charities, more than 40 percent (32,000) are faith-based, which include places of worship, clubs, and other forms of association (Hall et al., 2005).

Although religion is a very important source of social capital, mobilizing members in laudable causes and purposes, such mobilization may sometimes raise concerns. On more than one occasion, public attention has been directed to the link between religious activism and the security of Canadians.

Jedwab nevertheless argues that religious world views promote beneficial social capital overall, countering concerns that religious activism may undermine security. He notes that major world religions – Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam – like Christianity, all espouse some equivalent of a "golden rule" or ethic of reciprocity ("Treat others as you would like to be treated") and that most religiously engaged people believe that the relief of poverty or suffering (i.e. doing good deeds) is a practical application of their faith. In particular, he cites a 35-country inquiry into views of citizenship among five religious groups that reveals few differences in opinion regarding certain tenets of good citizenship⁴ (Table 1).

This evidence suggests that religious engagement fosters greater belonging and discourages threats (real or perceived) to security. However, a macro-level view shows that diverse views do exist within each religious group in Canada, including more radical views than the mainstream (among Christian and Jewish groups as well as among Muslims, Sikhs, etc.).

Challenges of Integrating Muslim Canadians

As a case study of a Canadian religious group that has been the focus of a disproportionately large amount of public and media debate in recent years, Zijad Delic was commissioned to conduct a comparative study on Muslim integration in Canada, France and Bosnia.

3 Figures quoted in the paragraph are from Jedwab, 2008a.

4 Ibid.

For Canadian Muslims, Delic suggests that Canada's multiculturalism model opens up opportunities to renew and reform their communal outlook within mainstream society while maintaining their religious beliefs. He argues that "this approach is unlike the one experienced by Muslims in France who live in a model of systemic assimilation or Muslims of Bosnia who were politically and socially under pressure to abandon their religious beliefs and become 'others'" (Delic, 2008). He argues the major difference is that Canada consciously and officially defines itself as a multicultural state in that it not only tolerates but also welcomes people with a variety of ethnic origins, respects minority religions and cultures, and has made constitutional commitments to this end. Canadian integration policies can help visible or religious minorities engage in their surroundings, reconcile societal differences, and create realistic opportunities for both minorities and majorities to contribute to society as a whole.

A recent survey suggests these policies may be effective: a majority of Canadian Muslims feel at ease and comfortable in Canada, recognize Canada as their homeland, and are proud to be called Canadians (CBC News; Environics Research Group, 2007). Yet obstacles to integration, inclusion, and participation remain. At odds with that survey – which found that 45 percent of Canadian Muslims have at least one university degree – is the fact that Muslims have the second-highest unemployment rate in Canada: 14.4 percent of Muslims are jobless, almost twice the national rate (Statistics Canada, 2001; Mujahid and Egab,

2004). In short, Canadian society does not yet appear to embrace Muslims as full citizens. As Husaini has noted, "If people are constantly reminded that they do not belong, whether on the crude level of the rhetoric of far-right discourse or media or the day-to-day discrimination, subtle or otherwise, that they may face, or when the government fails to listen to their concerns and request for needs, it is only a matter of time before they will feel alienated and lose the desire to belong" (Husaini, 1990).

According to Delic, overcoming the obstacles of integration and inclusion and expanding the opportunities to engage Canadian Muslims in Canada's civic, economic, social, and political life would be a major national undertaking. To facilitate this process, he argues that representatives of Canadian Muslim associations and government policy makers must make a priority of increasing Muslims' engagement in Canada. Delic calls on leaders, scholars and institutions (Muslim as well as non-Muslim) to find ways to help Canadian Muslims to participate fully in Canada. 🌟

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International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity

*Co-edited by: Paul Bramadat, Director, Centre for Studies in Religion and Society, University of Victoria, Canada
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This volume is the first in a new series, "Migration and Diversity: Comparative Issues and International Comparisons," that is a partnership of the Metropolis Project and Queen's University's School of Policy Studies. Volumes are developed at the annual International Metropolis Conferences and are published as part of the Queen's Policy Studies Series through McGill-Queen's University Press. The series editors, James Frideres (University of Calgary) and Paul Spoonley (Massey University) work with the editors of each volume to ensure that the volumes speak to both research and policy.

This volume explores the wide range of social and political responses to religious diversity that one finds in Western states. Authors focus on changes in the political,

legal and social responses to religious diversity resulting from increased international migration and the public visibility of new religious minorities in the West.

The first part of the volume examines contemporary theoretical debates about the governance of religious diversity in immigrant receiving countries. The second part presents original in-depth analyses of specific national contexts in which readers can scrutinize the social forces at work in the governance of religious diversity. The third part puts these national case studies into comparative perspective through an examination of both international normative frameworks for policy-formulation and the impact of contemporary world events on international public discourse about the relationship between religious diversity and migration.

Migration internationale et gouvernance de la diversité religieuse

Codé par : Paul Brannadat, directeur, Centre for Studies in Religion and Society, Université de Victoria, et Matthias Koenig, Département de sociologie, Université de Göttingen en Allemagne.

auteurs se penchent sur l'évolution des mesures politiques, juridiques et sociales à l'égard de la diversité religieuse en réponse à l'augmentation de la migration internationale et à la visibilité publique de nouvelles minorités religieuses en Occident.

La première partie est consacrée à des débats théoriques contemporains sur la gouvernance de la diversité religieuse dans les pays qui accueillent des immigrants. La deuxième partie présente une analyse détaillée originale de contextes nationaux précis dans lesquels les lecteurs peuvent examiner soigneusement les forces sociales à l'œuvre dans la gouvernance de la diversité religieuse. La troisième partie met ces études de cas nationaux dans une perspective comparative au moyen d'un examen des cadres normatifs internationaux pour l'élaboration de politiques et des répercussions des événements du monde contemporain sur le discours public international concernant la relation entre la diversité religieuse et l'immigration.

Ce volume est le premier d'une nouvelle série intitulée « Migration and Diversity : Comparative Issues and International Comparisons » (Migration et diversité : questions comparatives et comparaisons internationales), produite en partenariat par le projet Metropolis et l'École d'études politiques de l'Université Queen's. Les volumes consistent les résultats des travaux des conférences internationales Metro-polis annuelles et font partie de la collection *Policy Studies Series* de l'Université Queen's, publiée par les Presses universitaires McGill-Queen's. Les éditeurs de la série, James Frideres (Université de Calgary) et Paul Spoonley (Université Massey), veillent de concert avec les éditeurs de chaque volume à ce que ces volumes traitent à la fois de recherche et de politique.

Ce volume explore la vaste gamme des mesures sociales et politiques prises par les pouvoirs publics face à la diversité religieuse que l'on trouve dans les États occidentaux. Les

Les défis de l'intégration des Canadiens musulmans

Pour une étude de cas d'un groupe religieux canadien qui a été le point de mire d'un nombre disproportionnellement élevé de débats publics et médiatiques au cours des dernières années, Ziyad Delic a été mandaté pour réaliser une étude comparative sur l'intégration des musulmans au Canada, en France et en Bosnie.

En ce qui concerne les musulmans canadiens, Delic prétend que le modèle de multiculturalisme canadien ouvre des débouchés pour renouveler et réformer leur perspective collective dans la société dominante tout en conservant leurs croyances religieuses. Il fait valoir que « cette approche est différente de celle vécue par les musulmans en France, qui vivent dans un modèle d'assimilation systématique ou par les musulmans de la Bosnie, qui vivaient des pressions politiques et sociales pour abandonner leurs croyances religieuses et devenir » d'autres personnes » (Delic, 2008). Il allègue que la principale différence est que le Canada se définit consciemment et officiellement comme un État multiculturel, puisque non seulement il tolère, mais également il accueille des personnes de différentes origines ethniques, respecte les religions et les cultures des minorités, et a pris des engagements constitutionnels à cette fin. Les politiques canadiennes sur l'intégration peuvent aider les minorités visibles ou religieuses à s'engager dans leur milieu, à rapprocher des différences sociales, et à créer des débouchés réalistes tant pour les minorités et les majorités pour contribuer à la société dans son ensemble.

Une récente étude révèle que ces politiques peuvent être efficaces : une majorité de musulmans canadiens se sentent à l'aise et bien au Canada; ils reconnaissent

sent le Canada comme leur patrie, et ils sont fiers d'être appelés Canadiens (CBC News, Environics Research Group, 2007). Mais, des obstacles à l'intégration, à l'inclusion et à la participation demeurent. En contradiction avec cette étude – qui a révélé que 45 % des musulmans canadiens ont au moins un diplôme universitaire – on constate que les musulmans ont le deuxième taux de chômage le plus élevé au Canada : 14,4 % des musulmans sont sans emploi, presque deux fois le taux national (Statistique Canada, 2001; Mujahid et Egab, 2004). En bref, la société canadienne ne semble pas encore accepter les musulmans comme des citoyens à part entière. Comme l'a indiqué Husbaini : « Si on rappelle constamment aux gens qu'ils n'ont pas leur place, que ce soit au niveau rudimentaire de la rhétorique d'un discours d'extrême-droite ou des médias ou encore de la discrimination quotidienne, subtile ou autre, auxquels ils peuvent faire face, ou lorsque le gouvernement omet d'écouter leurs préoccupations et leurs demandes, ce n'est qu'une question de temps avant qu'ils se sentent aliénés et perdent le désir d'appartenance » (Husbaini, 1990).

Selon Delic, surmonter les obstacles de l'intégration et de l'inclusion et développer les possibilités d'engager les musulmans canadiens dans la vie civique, économique, sociale et politique constituerait une grande entreprise nationale. Pour faciliter ce processus, il fait valoir que des représentants des associations musulmanes canadiennes et des décideurs du gouvernement doivent prioriser l'augmentation de l'engagement des musulmans au Canada. Delic demande aux dirigeants, aux étudiants et aux institutions (musulmans et non musulmans) de trouver des façons d'aider les musulmans canadiens à participer pleinement au Canada.

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3 Les données citées sont de Jedwab, 2008a.
4 Ibid.

Par exemple, entre 1960 et 1990 selon Jedwab, les dépenses effectuées par tous les paliers de gouvernement en santé, en éducation et dans les services sociaux ont connu une croissance rapide, bien qu'une prestation directe de nombreux services soit demeurée dans les mains d'organismes sans but lucratif. Les congrégations religieuses (églises locales, temples, mosquées, synagogues et autres lieux de culte) ont répondu aux besoins sociaux présents dans leurs collectivités, notamment à ceux qui pouvaient avoir fait l'objet d'une baisse du soutien du

la philanthropie).
comme les membres d'une association et qu'il est mesuré par des indicateurs l'Amérique du Nord est religieux (tel moitié du stock de capital social de dans la société. Il indique que près de la importants du capital social qui est créé canadienne – en tant que facteurs tant, mais négligé, dans la société civile tions religieuses jouent un rôle impor- Jedwab (2008a) prend que les associa- **communautés religieuses**

Le capital social dans les

Source : International Social Survey Program et Carleton University Survey Centre (2004).

Pourcentage de personnes qui considèrent les valeurs suivantes liées à la citoyenneté comme « très importantes » :	Aider les citoyens moins favorisés au pays	Comprendre les opinions des autres	Participer activement aux associations
Catholiques	74,6	68,3	85,0
Protestants	71,6	70,5	86,7
Juifs	87,6	72,3	82,8
Musulmans	71,5	51,2	80,5
Bouddhistes	68,7	55,8	79,2
			33,0

TABLEAU 1
Importance liée aux valeurs en matière de citoyenneté auprès des adhérents de différents organismes religieux

gouvernement. Parmi les organismes religieux qui servent les gens directement, 73 % servent principalement le grand public (c'est à dire, pas seulement leurs membres). Du point de vue de ce qui est parfois décrit comme un « bon » capital social, Jedwab indique que seulement 27 % des organismes religieux mentionnent que leurs membres bénéficient le plus de leurs activités, bien que près de 70 % signalent que les membres et les non-membres bénéficient de leurs services. Cela fait contraste avec les 46 % de tous les organismes (p. ex. religieux et non-religieux) où les non-membres déclarent bénéficier des services offerts.
Le Canada a le deuxième secteur sans but lucratif en importance dans le monde, conformément à l'*Analyse comparative du secteur sans but lucratif et bénévole du Canada*, qui rend compte du secteur dans 37 pays en fonction de la taille, de la portée et des dons. Parmi les organismes religieux enregistrés, plus de 40 % (32 000) sont confessionnels, ce qui inclut des lieux de culte, des clubs et d'autres formes d'association (Hall *et al.*, 2005).

Cette preuve semble indiquer que l'engagement religieux favorise une grande appartenance et décourage les menaces (réelles ou perçues) pour la sécurité. Toutefois, une opinion par la macro-analyse montre que des opinions différentes existent dans chaque groupe religieux au Canada, notamment des points de vue plus radicaux que le courant dominant (auprès des groupes chrétiens et juifs, ainsi que des musulmans, des sikhs, etc.).

Nant certains principes du véritable civisme⁴ (Tableau 1).
peu de différences dans l'opinion concernant cinq groupes religieux qui révèle sur les points de vue de la citoyenneté donne une enquête auprès de 35 pays tique de leur foi. En particulier, il mentionne une enquête auprès de 35 pays actions) constitue une application pratique de la souffrance (en faisant de bonnes ment que la délivrance de la pauvreté ou des gens engagés au plan religieux estimeraient être traitée) et que la plupart réciprocity (« traiter les autres comme on d'une « règle d'or » ou à l'éthique de la adhérent toutes à un certain équivalent et l'islam – comme le christianisme, judaïsme, l'hindouïsme, le bouddhisme grandes religions du monde – le miner la sécurité. Il indique que les selon lesquelles l'activisme religieux peut sembler, les préoccupations contraires un capital social bénéfique dans l'en- nions du monde religieux encouragent Jedwab fait cependant valoir que les opti- religieux et la sécurité des Canadiens. été dirigée sur le lien entre l'activisme plus d'une reprise, l'attention publique a parfois soulever des préoccupations. À des fins louables, cette mobilisation peut lisation des membres dans des causes et importante de capital social, par la mobi- Bien que la religion soit une source très

2 La liste des défis est tirée de Seljak, pp. 6-24.

Seljak laisse entendre que le facteur commun reliant ces débats est la confusion à propos de la nature et des paramètres du laïcisme dans une société moderne, particulièrement la question du lien approprié entre les croyances religieuses et leur expression dans la sphère publique. Son travail récent dans ce domaine, présenté ailleurs dans ce numéro, révèle que cette confusion peut être attribuable à une mauvaise compréhension des limites du laïcisme. Le manque de compréhension peut être accentué par l'influence du laïcisme américain et un « mythe de progrès » qui se manifeste en partie comme

En 2008, la Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles au Québec a suggéré (dans ce qui est connu sous le nom de rapport Bourdieu-Taylor) que la province définisse sa démarche à l'égard du traitement des besoins de ses communautés religieuses, et particulièrement de la distinction entre institutions laïques associées à « l'État » et les droits des personnes à une expression religieuse.

la religion et le financement scolaire en Ontario, ainsi que les accommodements raisonnables au Québec. Durant l'été 2005, un débat public qui allait dans de nombreuses directions à propos d'une proposition de laisser les résidents de l'Ontario utiliser la loi musulmane pour régler les conflits familiaux selon la législation sur l'arbitrage existante de la province a pris fin abruptement lorsque le gouvernement de l'Ontario a annoncé des plans pour interdire tous les arbitrages fondés sur la religion dans la province selon les motifs qu'une telle interdiction clarifierait les limites entre l'Église et l'État. Ultérieurement, durant la campagne électorale de 2007, les partis politiques de la province ont croisé le fer sur des propositions visant à élargir le financement public aux écoles confessionnelles de l'Ontario.

la croyance populaire selon laquelle pour devenir moderne et avancée, une société doit de plus en plus se libérer des croyances religieuses.

Seljak prétend que la notion de la séparation de l'Église et de l'État, un « mur de séparation » clair et précis entre ces deux institutions, est une description inexacte de la situation au Canada. Bien que le Canada se soit laïcisé, sa séparation des institutions politiques, économiques et sociales des institutions religieuses, une majorité de Canadiens se décrivent toujours comme « chrétiens ». De plus, le nombre de communautés religieuses non chrétiennes a augmenté depuis les années 1970.

Seljak conclut que toute attribution

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expression dans la sphère publique.

• aliéner des grands secteurs de la population canadienne par le refus de reconnaître ou de respecter les éléments publics de leurs traditions religieuses;

• laisser de côté d'autres revendications faites au nom de la religion (par exemple, les revendications faites par les peuples autochtones pour avoir accès à certaines terres afin de répondre aux besoins de spiritualité des Autochtones);

• décourager les contributions à la société canadienne des institutions et organisations confessionnelles, telles que les écoles, les hôpitaux et les agences de services sociaux ainsi que les organismes culturels, sportifs et caritatifs;

• favoriser la résistance aux accommodements raisonnables des différencés religieux, un droit de la personne qui garantit qu'une pratique ou une politique ne fait pas de la majorité ne fait pas de discrimination à l'égard des membres de groupes de minorités religieuses;

• encourager la création de « ghettos » religieux : des communautés ethno-religieuses fermées qui ont relativement peu de lien avec le reste de la société canadienne; et

• nuire à l'intégration des nouveaux arrivants ethno-religieux (immigrants et réfugiés) en donnant à la société et à l'État canadiens un visage public qu'ils considèrent comme étrangers ou hostiles?

• masquer l'importance des valeurs chrétiennes habituellement attribuées à la culture publique canadienne et aux les pratiques et les structures institutionnelles;

sur l'anti-terrorisme du Canada, les sociaux, tout en tenant compte des libé- res publiques et des droits de la per- sonne.

À partir des suppositions du modèle de souche, Bramadat et Wortley émettent l'hypothèse que la radicalisation des jeunes religieux peut être enracinée dans l'expérience de l'inégalité, de l'intolé- rance et de la discrimination. Ils indi- quent que les « perceptions d'injustice sociale, ainsi que les sentiments connexes de colère, de désespoir et d'aliénation peuvent donner aux jeunes les motiva- tions et les justifications dont ils ont besoin pour participer à l'extrémisme criminel et religieux » (Bramadat et Wor- tley, 2008a).

Si les hypothèses de ce modèle sont justes, Bramadat et Wortley soutiennent une démarche à l'égard du combat de la radicalisation basée sur l'ajout d'un accent sur la discrimination religieuse aux politiques et aux programmes conçus pour combattre la haine et la discrimination. Une démarche plus glo- bale intégrerait les buts en plus de com- poser avec la discrimination : des buts tels que le retrait des obstacles à une participation sociale, économique et politique complète et le travail avec les communautés sur l'établissement de valeurs démocratiques et le sentiment d'appartenance.

Interaction des Canadiens religieux avec une société canadienne de plus en plus laïque

David Seljak a exploré le thème de la façon dont les Canadiens religieux inter- agissent avec ce qui est largement perçu comme étant une société de plus en plus laïque. Il explique qu'au cours des der- nières années, notre compréhension du lien entre l'État et les institutions et les communautés religieuses au Canada a été mise à l'épreuve par les événements et la controverse publique relative aux questions telles que l'arbitrage fondé sur

Bien que le préam- bule à la Loi sur le

canadien cite la reli- gion comme étant

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fait valoir que le discours public

entourant le multi- culturalisme et

l'immigration, et peut-être la citoyen- neté de façon plus

large, n'a pas tenu compte de l'import- tance pour de nom- breux Canadiens des

identités religieuses et les besoins des communautés

religieuses.

dispositions en matière d'égalité pour certaines communautés ethniques ou religieuses minoritaires. D'autres recherches révèlent qu'une approche multiculturelle efficace pourrait répon- dre aux besoins de sécurité par l'étude des facteurs contribuant au comporte- ment antisocial et à la radicalisation de manière plus large, puisque la sécurité « sociale » inquiète. Cette situation exigerait de travailler avec les commu- nautés et de garder à l'esprit les aspects

taques importantes en Ontario dans le cadre d'une cellule terroriste islamique. Une majorité des suspects étaient jeunes : certains dans leur adolescence et le début de la vingtaine.

Ces événements ont fait du croisement du radi- calisme, de la jeunesse et de la religion une ques- tion controversée du débat public au Canada. Bramadat et Wortley font valoir qu'il faut claire- ment mieux comprendre la portée et la nature de ce croisement qui n'a pas, jusqu'à maintenant, retenu l'attention des chercheurs. Une explora- tion équilibrée nécessi- tait que la radicalisation des jeunes religieux soit examinée de façon élar- gie, plutôt que de se concentrer précieusement sur les jeunes musul- mans. De plus, une préoccupation liée à la sécurité nationale peut mener à des perceptions de profilage racial et reli- gieux, qui peuvent miner les libertés civiles et les dispositions en matière d'égalité pour

La radicalisation religieuse et les jeunes : importation et souche

Paul Bramadat et Scott Worley ont effectué des recherches sur la radicalisation des jeunes dans le judaïsme, le christianisme, l'islam, l'hindouisme et le sikhisme.

Bien que l'attentat à la bombe d'Air India en 1985 ait donné aux Canadiens un premier indice des menaces potentielles pour la sécurité liées au radicalisme fondé (au moins en partie) dans l'identité religieuse, ce n'est qu'avec les événements du 11 septembre 2001 que ces menaces et le besoin de comprendre leurs causes ont acquis une urgence considérable à l'échelle de l'Amérique du Nord et partout dans le monde. Le nouvel environnement postérieur au 11 septembre a concentré l'attention sur le croisement de la race, de l'origine ethnique et de l'identité religieuse. Bramadat et Worley soulignent la nécessité de combler les lacunes dans notre compréhension de ce croisement et ses conséquences sur la politique publique – particulièrement en ce qui a trait à la sécurité publique et au multiculturalisme.

Ils soulignent que bien que la radicalisation puisse être attribuée à différentes causes, dans l'environnement actuel, il peut être nécessaire de composer avec les causes de l'exclusion et de la marginalisation, puisqu'elles peuvent contribuer à un comportement antisocial et à la radicalisation. Peut-être plus que tout autre événement récent, les attentats à la bombe terroristes de 2005 à Londres ont resserré l'état sur les jeunes de la minorité, puisque les auteurs étaient de jeunes hommes qui avaient été élevés dans la culture britannique. De plus, durant l'été de 2006, la police a arrêté et accusé 17 hommes de la région du Grand Toronto en vertu des lois

l'origine ethnique et la langue) et les besoins des communautés religieuses (Biles et Ibrahim, 2005).

En février 2008, le ministère du Patrimoine canadien a été l'hôte d'un colloque sur la diversité religieuse, auquel ont assisté plus d'une centaine de spécialistes et de décideurs et dans le cadre duquel plusieurs chercheurs ont présenté leurs conclusions. Ce colloque a été le point culminant des efforts (de 2006 à 2008) de la Direction générale du multiculturalisme et des droits de la personne d'inventorier les défis démographiques, sociaux et culturels au Canada. Pour susciter un débat sur les conséquences stratégiques possibles des conclusions, l'événement a présenté la recherche sur la diversité religieuse excitée à la demande du Ministère. S'appuyant sur cette recherche spéciale du magazine *Diversité canadienne* a été consacrée à la diversité religieuse au Canada (Jedwab, 2008a et 2008b; Seljak 2008; Bramadat et Worley 2008a; Dib, 2008; Delic, 2008).

Le présent article résume les conclusions des chercheurs mandatés et les conséquences stratégiques qui en découlent. Les thèmes suivants reviennent : la radicalisation religieuse, les interactions des Canadiens religieux avec une société canadienne de plus en plus laïque, le capital social dans les communautés religieuses, et les défis découlant de l'intégration des Canadiens musulmans.

Malgré la rareté de renseignements de base sur l'identité religieuse et sa pertinence pour la politique publique, l'intérêt envers la recherche sur la diversité religieuse – ses effets potentiels et les réponses stratégiques à celle-ci – s'est accru au cours de la dernière décennie.

décompte adéquat des minorités, mais elle date : les attitudes sur la religion peuvent avoir changé à mesure que le temps s'écoule depuis les événements

Ainsi, il y a un écart dans les données sur la diversité religieuse et l'intensité des identités religieuses. Néanmoins, des efforts ont été faits au cours des dernières années pour comprendre les réalités et les répercussions de l'éventail grandissant des identités religieuses au Canada. À la lumière d'un nombre croissant de controverses sur l'accommodement privé et public des minorités religieuses à l'échelle du Canada (p. ex. : l'arbitrage islamique et le financement public des écoles confessionnelles en Ontario, et les incidents

au Québec qui ont mené à la création de la Commission Bouchard-Taylor), les discussions en table ronde révèlent qu'un manque de connaissances des religions chez les décideurs et le grand public peut gêner la perception des situations et des réactions efficaces à celles-ci, ce qui peut compromettre la cohésion sociale.

Bien que le préambule à la *Loi sur le multiculturalisme canadien* cite la religion comme étant l'une des caractéristiques fondamentales de la diversité canadienne, certains ont fait valoir que le discours public entourant le multiculturalisme et l'immigration, et peut-être la citoyenneté de façon plus large, n'a pas tenu compte de l'importance pour de nombreux Canadiens des identités religieuses (comme distinctes d'autres repères de l'identité culturelle, p. ex.

Personnel de recherche

Direction générale du multiculturalisme
Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada

Introduction

Dans la foulée de l'intérêt grandissant à l'égard des enjeux de l'identité religieuse au Canada et dans d'autres pays, cet article résume les recherches que des universitaires éminents ont réalisées entre avril 2007 et mars 2008 grâce à une aide financière de la Direction générale du multiculturalisme de Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada¹. L'identité religieuse est centrale dans la vie de nombreuses personnes, et l'intensité de même que la manifestation publique de ces identités prennent l'ampleur dans de nombreux pays. Même les sociétés principalement laïques doivent relever les défis à la diversité religieuse croissante.

Le discours public important sur la place de la religion dans la société canadienne se poursuit depuis plusieurs décennies. Ce qui est nouveau depuis les dernières

Une étude des recherches récentes sur la diversité religieuse et les conséquences sur la politique de multiculturalisme

Efforts de recherche

récents et écarts restants

années est que notre démarche de longue date pour composer avec des différences religieuses doit s'adapter à la diversité religieuse croissante au Canada. L'incertitude quant à la nécessité et à la façon d'adapter la pratique privée et publique à cette nouvelle réalité a été évidente dans l'attention importante que les médias et le grand public ont portée aux repères religieux visibles des vêtements (tête couverte pour les femmes musulmanes ou turbans pour les hommes sikhs), à l'arbitrage fondé sur la religion, et à des incidents qui ont été perçus comme des signes d'antisémitisme et d'islamophobie accrues. Bien que la présence des minorités religieuses au Canada ne soit pas grande, sa croissance continue, combinée à une diversité religieuse grandissante, laisse croire que ces questions auront de plus en plus d'incidence dans l'avenir.

Malgré la rareté de renseignements de base sur l'identité religieuse et sa pertinence pour la politique publique, l'intérêt envers la recherche sur la diversité religieuse – ses effets potentiels et les réponses stratégiques à celle-ci – s'est accru au cours de la dernière décennie. La question « Quelle est la religion de cette personne? » a été posée la dernière fois dans le Recensement du Canada de 2001, et elle sera posée de nouveau en 2011. Statistique Canada a posé des questions sur l'identité religieuse dans les études plus récentes (par exemple, l'Enquête sociale générale), mais les tailles de l'échantillon de ceux qui adhèrent aux religions minoritaires sont trop petites pour être utilisées dans les recherches. L'enquête sur la diversité ethnique postérieure au recensement de 2002 (Statistique Canada, 2002) comporte un

1 Le Programme du multiculturalisme a été transféré du ministère du Patrimoine canadien au ministère de la Citoyenneté et de l'Immigration en octobre 2008.

également des débats religieux initialement réservés aux musulmans mais, à partir de 1572, ouverts aux hindous, aux jains, aux parsis, aux chrétiens et même aux athées. Cette situation présentait un contraste frappant avec les autres parties du monde où foisonnaient la bigoterie religieuse et l'intolérance. (Il faut signaler que 1572 marque également l'année du massacre de Saint-Barthélemy en France.)

Akbar a aussi élaboré et mis en place la doctrine largement soufie du *subhikul* en vertu de laquelle toutes les religions étaient égales, de sorte que les célébrations de tous les groupes religieux devaient être observées publiquement. Cette tradition de respect et d'impartialité de l'État à l'égard des adeptes de toutes les religions allait se poursuivre durant la période initiale de la présence britannique.

La coexistence prolongée d'une grande multiplicité de perspectives religieuses et non religieuses et l'impossibilité pour l'une d'entre elles de dominer ou d'anéantir les autres a donné lieu à un espace conceptuel qui a permis le développement de traditions de liberté religieuse. Non seulement les différentes fois religieuses pouvaient-elles répandre leurs enseignements mais encore pouvaient-elles ériger leurs propres lieux de dévotion. Comme le confirme Max Weber : « Les penseurs religieux et philosophiques de l'Inde ont pu profiter d'une liberté presque absolue pendant longtemps. La liberté de pensée de l'Inde ancienne n'a trouvé aucun parallèle en Occident jusqu'à tout récemment. »

Tout comme le mouvement bakhti insistait sur le choix individuel et la dévotion à Dieu par le biais d'un gourou ou d'un *sant*, le soufisme a accordé une place importante aux *pirs* et aux fakirs. Avec le temps, la distinction entre gourou et *pir*, entre *sant* et fakir, en vint à s'effriter et ceux qui avaient été élevés dans la foi hindoue et musulmane délaissèrent les limites formelles pour suivre l'enseignement plus fluide des shaktas, des saints baktis et des soufis. Ceux qui n'appartenaient pas aux castes supérieures de la société suivirent et comblèrent leurs besoins religieux par ce que Romila Thapar appelle la tradition *gourou-pir*. Cette tradition, qui mettait l'accent sur le choix individuel, le dis-sentiment, l'égalité sociale, la prospérité matérielle, et qui appuyait la fluidité des frontières entre les religions clairement définies de l'élite, enseigna la tolérance et une certaine forme d'éthique sociale universelle limitée mais honnête; elle fut suivie par une vaste majorité de gens en Inde. On croit que cette tradition a donné naissance aux ressources conceptuelles de la pratique considérable, bien que non toujours uniforme, de différentes formes de tolérance et de respect pour l'hétérodoxie religieuse dans les siècles qui suivirent, notamment durant l'époque de laïcisme indien moderne.

L'empereur moghol (musulman) Akbar du 16^e siècle incarne la tradition en abolissant la *jizya* (taxe du pèlerin imposée aux hindous), interdisant les conversions forcées à l'islam, éliminant les restrictions sur l'érection des temples et nommant des hindous à des postes supérieurs. Faisant écho aux conseils religieux formés par son prédécesseur bouddhiste, Ashoka, deux millénaires plus tôt, il organisa

3 Voir pp. 61-62 de *India as a Secular State* par Donald Eugene Smith, (Princeton, Princeton University Press), 1963.

carnation. Les tenants rejetaient toute forme de rituels, sapant la suprématie des brahmanes qui se posaient en maîtres de leur exécution, et en vinrent même à contester le système des castes. Un mouvement baptisé *particulier*, le *shāivisme* fondé par un saint (Basava) de Karnataka au 12^e siècle, a poussé beaucoup plus loin, en rejetant l'autorité védique, le rôle des prêtres, la distinction entre les castes et même le rite de la crémation, favorisant plutôt l'inhumation. Et qui plus est, il a amorcé une restructuration radicale du rôle des femmes dans le sud de l'Inde. Il a prôné fortement l'égalité des hommes et des femmes, promu le remariage des veuves, condamné le mariage des enfants de même que les mariages arrangés; il a cessé de considérer les femmes menstruées comme souillées².

L'arrivée de l'islam en Inde, au début du 8^e siècle, a élargi l'éventail des maîtres et des déités et la confluence du baptême et des traditions soufies (islamiques) a donné naissance à plus d'innovations encore. Ces notions syncrétiques s'éloignaient carrément et de l'hindouisme orthodoxe et de l'islam, tout comme elles contournaient le conflit entre les orthodoxes des deux systèmes. Comme le baptême, le soufisme affirmait fréquemment la liberté individuelle d'expérimenter la foi religieuse islamique, même si cela entraînait une profonde remise en question de la *sharia*. Le baptême *nirguna*, tout comme les différentes formes de l'islam, remettait totalement l'idolâtrie en question.

Le rejet du système de castes par les mouvements baptisés radicaux est allé de pair avec la propagation de l'égalité sociale et religieuse prônée par l'islam. L'islam et l'hindouisme populaires se sont orientés vers une forme d'idiosyncrasie religieuse individualiste et le rejet des institutions sociales et leur puissance, comme on peut le constater par l'enseignement de Ramana à 16^e siècle, qui favorisait l'égalitarisme et dont les disciples étaient acceptés sans égard à leur caste. Kabir, un de ses élèves, poussa d'une façon encore plus radicale les enseignements de son maître, alléguant que chaque dévot devait chercher Dieu directement et prônant un ordre social radicalement égalitaire. Ses opinions furent adoptées par de vastes sections de la société, notamment des paysans, des artisans et les Intouchables.

Aux dires d'Amartya Sen, l'Inde possède une longue tradition d'hétérodoxie, et il cite de nombreux passages tirés parfois des plus vieux textes classiques du pays, les Védas (qui remontent au milieu du deuxième millénaire avant l'ère chrétienne) et d'autres textes sanscrits qui témoignent de nombreuses interrogations de sceptiques, et d'agnostiques ou d'athées, sur l'orthodoxie de la religion et le rôle et la position privilégiée de la caste brahmane.

L'émergence du bouddhisme en Inde présente une importance toute particulière. Bouddha estimait que la croyance en une dette était beaucoup moins importante que les relations humaines et un bon comportement envers sa famille et sa communauté. De plus, étant donné que le rôle de l'État consiste à prévenir la désintégration de la société, et puisque la structure des castes constitue un élément de désintégration, les premiers bouddhistes indiens ont voulu que les dirigeants s'y opposent, faisant d'eux les initiateurs d'une version de la notion d'égalité sociale s'étendant, du moins en principe, même si ce n'était pas toujours en pratique, à la fois aux hommes et aux femmes.

L'empereur bouddhiste Ashoka (troisième siècle avant l'ère chrétienne) avait codifié des règles sur les débats publics en matière de religion, insistant sur la retenue et le besoin d'honorer des sectes autres que la sienne propre. Le bouddhisme est également important pour l'influence qu'il a exercé plus tard sur les mouvements religieux populaires de l'Inde médiévale (sixième et septième siècles de l'ère chrétienne) créant ainsi le fondement de l'élaboration du laïcisme indien.

Les mouvements baptisés sont nés aux sixième et septième siècles, particulièrement dans le sud de l'Inde. Les adeptes du baptême jugeaient surtout important d'être libérés du cycle des réincarnations et des misères du monde matériel. Mais, à l'encontre des premières formes d'hindouisme et de bouddhisme, le baptême prônait l'idée que seule la dévotion et la foi en Dieu permettraient de se libérer de la réin-

2 Voir le livre de Kenneth Jones, 1989, page 11, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*, publié par les presses de l'Université de Cambridge.

absolue. Aucun État ne peut aider ou contenir toutes les religions de la même manière et au même degré.

• L'État peut intervenir dans les affaires religieuses, ou s'en abstenir, uniquement en fonction de ce qui favorise les valeurs que sont la liberté et l'égalité.

• Il faut interpréter les valeurs de liberté et d'égalité comme des droits individuels et, au besoin, comme des droits collectifs. Les droits des communautés sont particulièrement importants si les groupes confessionnels sont vulnérables ou si, du fait du petit nombre de leurs membres, ils n'ont qu'un pouvoir très relatif d'influencer les prises de décisions.

• La laïcité ne doit pas se montrer hostile ni servile face à la religion. Elle ne doit faire preuve ni de déférence aveugle ni d'indifférence, mais doit plutôt avoir un respect critique à l'égard de toutes les religions.

Une laïcité qui professe une distance réglée par des principes et qui se montre réceptive à la diversité des valeurs ne peut éviter de contextualiser ses jugements. Les jugements contextualisés permettent des arrangements et des compromis éthiquement adaptés.

La sensibilité à de nombreuses valeurs, le maintien d'une distance réglée par des principes, et l'engagement envers le raisonnement contextualisé permet aux sociétés d'en arriver à leur propre conception et à

leur propre modèle de laïcité. Les sociétés doivent reconnaître le besoin de multiples formes de laïcité.

• Ceux qui estiment s'être libérés de la religion ou qui pensent que leur propre système de croyances est libérateur, mais non celui des autres, devraient accepter avec humilité que rien n'est irréversible. Ils devraient également se souvenir de l'histoire de l'oppression exercée à l'intérieur de leurs propres traditions religieuses ou non religieuses.

• Alors que de plus en plus de sociétés deviennent multiconfessionnelles, il devient essentiel de prendre conscience de la vulnérabilité de sa propre religion, et de sa propre vision du monde, si on veut créer un ordre mondial pacifique et juste.

Conclusion et répercussions sur les politiques

L'Inde, en soi, n'offre qu'une solution de rechange parmi d'autres. Il s'agit d'une version inscrite dans les pratiques exemplaires de nombreux États, dont les États occidentaux si attachés au laïcisme politique. Pourtant, le modèle indien permet de démontrer plusieurs points.

• Les États occidentaux doivent en venir à mieux comprendre leurs propres pratiques de laïcité tout comme le laïcisme occidental doit en venir à mieux se définir.

- Le Canada devra examiner soigneusement le potentiel normatif de ses propres pratiques d'accommodement social et politique, et tirer des leçons de la variante indienne d'un modèle qui cherche à élaborer des solutions viables au cas-par-cas plutôt que de s'accrocher à un modèle idéalisé conçu à un moment particulier de l'histoire de ses sociétés ancestrales ou avoisinantes.
- Le Canada, comme d'autres sociétés occidentales, doit se façonner une laïcité moins enracinée dans la chrétienté, moins liée au libéralisme classique et plus ouvertement réceptive aux religions à caractère public et communautaire.
- Il doit y avoir une volonté de reconnaître les droits religieux des collecti-

- Le modèle démontre que nous n'avons pas à choisir entre hostilité active et indifférence passive, ni entre hostilité irrespectueuse et indifférence respectueuse. Nous pouvons combiner les deux : l'État peut intervenir pour décourager certaines pratiques, à condition qu'il se montre respectueux des autres pratiques de cette même religion, en les soutenant publiquement.
- En ne s'engageant pas, dès le départ, exclusivement en faveur des valeurs individuelles ou des valeurs collectives, et en n'installant pas des frontières rigides entre le public et le privé, la laïcité constitutionnelle indienne permet de prendre des décisions sur ces questions à l'intérieur de la dynamique ouverte de la vie politique démocratique – bien qu'à l'intérieur de limites fondamentales comme le renoncement à la violence et la protection des droits humains fondamentaux, y compris le droit de ne pas être privé de son droit de participer à la société.
- Par cet attachement à de multiples valeurs et cette distance réglée par des principes, l'État cherche à concilier des valeurs différentes, ambiguës, mais toutes aussi importantes les unes que les autres. C'est ce qui fait de son idéal de laïcité d'avantage un arrangement contextuel, éthiquement adapté et politiquement négocié – ce qu'il est réellement – plutôt qu'une doctrine scientifique produite par des idéologues et simplement mise en place par des agents politiques.
- Dans un objectif de concision, une formulation un peu forcée de la laïcité indienne pourrait se présenter à peu près comme suit : l'État doit en principe se distancier de toutes les institutions publiques, au nom des valeurs aussi importantes les unes que les autres (et parfois conflictuelles) de paix, prospérité matérielle, dignité, liberté et égalité (dans toutes leurs versions complexes individuelles ou communautaires).
- Les spécialistes du laïcisme à l'occidentale commentent peut-être à trouver quelque chose de familier dans l'idéal formulé précédemment. Bien sûr, le modèle indien n'est pas tombé du ciel. Il partage une histoire avec l'Occident, une histoire qu'il a en partie apprise et reprise. On peut voir dans la laïcité à l'indienne une façon de récupérer la riche histoire du laïcisme occidental, une histoire en grande partie oubliée, dévalorisée ou souvent obscurcie par la formule de la stricte séparation entre l'État et la religion. Ce faisant, les sociétés occidentales peuvent lire dans le laïcisme à l'indien pas l'adoption d'une politique en matière de religion ou à l'égard des organisations confessionnelles. La religion joue un rôle important dans la vie de bien des personnes et les institutions religieuses entrent en contact avec d'autres institutions souvent laïques. La séparation ne signifie pas l'exclusion du religieux du domaine public.
- L'État ne peut se soustraire à la nécessité d'adopter ou d'endosser une politique en matière de religion ou à l'égard des organisations confessionnelles. La religion joue un rôle important dans la vie de bien des personnes et les institutions religieuses entrent en contact avec d'autres institutions souvent laïques. La séparation ne signifie pas l'exclusion du religieux du domaine public.
- Il ne faut pas non plus interpréter la séparation de l'Église et de l'État comme une neutralité stricte ou

Le modèle indien de laïcité pourrait s'avérer intéressant à cet égard. L'Inde offre en effet un modèle qui, s'il n'est pas consacré dans une doctrine ou une théorie (un « laïcisme »), a été élaboré

Existe-t-il un élément qui peut les faire sortir de ce dilemme? La difficulté provient peut-être du postulat implicite selon lequel il n'existerait qu'un modèle de laïcité : celui qui est né en Occident. Peut-être existe-t-il ailleurs d'autres modèles de laïcité plus aptes à répondre aux nouveaux besoins des sociétés occidentales sans qu'elles aient à abandonner les valeurs sur lesquelles reposait le modèle initial?

d'Etat officielle?
 remment à une certaine forme de religion elles leur adhésion pour adhérer ouver- nouvelles circonstances, abandonneront- sion à la stricte laïcité ou, en présence de encore plus dogmatiques dans leur adhé- voie choisiront-elles? Deviendront-elles les sociétés occidentales évoluent, quelle première option. Au fur et à mesure que rejette la forme laïque et plutôt choisi la Etats à l'extérieur de l'Occident ont on le voit en Occident? De nombreux rement la religion de la laïcité, comme purement individualistes, séparant net- confessionnel, théocratique ou l'Etat Ne reste-t-il que deux options? L'Etat indien

Une autre conception de la laïcité : le modèle indien

Il existe, outre ces Etats laïcs « armés », des Etats laïcs attachés à la liberté et à l'égalité, soit des Etats fondés sur des valeurs dans la tradition occidentale de la laïcité. Le problème, toutefois, c'est qu'il s'agit précisément des Etats que l'on dit aujourd'hui en crise.

conjointement par des hindous, des musulmans et des adhérents d'autres religions du sous-continent. Il s'agit du modèle que l'on peut observer durant les périodes exemplaires de la pratique communautaire en Inde, ainsi que dans la constitution du pays, lorsque celle-ci est interprétée correctement.
 Le modèle n'a pas tout simplement surgi sous l'influence de la modernité coloniale de la première moitié du 20^e siècle. Il repose sur des antécédents propres et plus profonds remontant à une hétérodoxie religieuse richement documentée de l'époque védique (deuxième millénaire avant l'ère chrétienne), passant par la renaissance du brahmanisme védique sous l'influence bouddhique et jaïne depuis le milieu du premier millénaire avant l'ère chrétienne jusqu'au début de l'époque médiévale (mouvements baptisés des sixième et septième siècles de l'ère chrétienne) de même que par l'arrivée de l'islam (et l'émergence du sikhisme), qui insistaient tous sur l'égalité sociale. (Voir encadré à la page 76)

La difficulté provient peut-être du postulat implicite selon lequel il n'existerait qu'un modèle de laïcité : celui qui est né en Occident.

groupe confessionnels jouissent d'une reconnaissance officielle et donc publique.
 Le modèle prône de multiples valeurs de liberté et d'égalité, non pas au sens étroit de libertés individuelles, mais interprétées de façon large de manière à englober l'autonomie relative des groupes religieux, ainsi que d'autres valeurs plus fondamentales comme la paix et la tolérance entre les communautés. Ce modèle est ainsi très attentif au potentiel qu'ont les religions de sanctionner la violence.
 Il n'exige pas un mur séparant l'Etat de la religion. Il existe des frontières, bien entendu, mais elles demeurent poreuses. C'est ce qui permet à l'Etat d'intervenir dans les affaires religieuses. Cette intervention peut prendre diverses formes : aide aux établissements d'enseignement de communautés confessionnelles sur une base non préférentielle, ou interdiction de pratiques qui privent de la même dignité et d'une égalité de statut certains adeptes d'une même religion ou des adeptes d'autres confessions (par exemple, l'interdiction de toute discrimination contre les Intouchables, l'obligation de permettre à tous, quelle que soit leur caste, d'entrer dans les temples hindous, et les interventions visant à corriger les inégalités hommes/femmes). Bref, le modèle indien interprète la séparation non pas comme une stricte exclusion ou une stricte neutralité, mais plutôt comme l'adoption de ce que l'on pourrait appeler une *distance régie par des principes*.

Le contexte social dans lequel cette définition a vu le jour fut le problème fondamental auquel étaient confrontées les sociétés occidentales qui se modernisaient : une menace à la liberté posée par l'égglise (ou par des églises concurrentes) nourrissant des visées hégémoniques, une menace à la liberté

religieuse individuelle (la liberté pour chacun de suivre sa propre voie vers Dieu/la liberté de conscience individuelle) et à la liberté dans un sens plus général en tant (ultimement) que fondation d'une citoyenneté commune.

Pour surmonter ce problème, les sociétés occidentales en voie de modernisation ont dû

créer ou consolider d'autres pôles d'autorité publique totalement séparés de l'égglise qui avait dominé jusque-là. Dans certains cas, l'Etat s'est carrément dissocié d'une religion hégémonique, tant pour protéger la liberté religieuse que la faire, le modèle occidental de laïcisme est devenu une partie du problème. Ce laïcisme individualiste est, à plusieurs égards, trop fermé pour être largement accepté et il est de plus en plus contesté non seulement à l'extérieur des sociétés occidentales, mais aussi en leur sein. De fait, le modèle occidental de laïcisme est devenu une partie du problème.

La laïcité occidentale n'a pas été conçue pour des sociétés pré-sentant une profonde diversité religieuse et a du mal à composer avec des religions à orientation communautaire.

La rupture totale – une exclusion mutuelle (un mur, pour reprendre l'expression célèbre de Thomas Jefferson) entre les deux institutions concernées, l'une intrinsèquement et exclusivement publique, l'autre étant invitée à se retirer au sein de la sphère privée et à y rester. L'individualisme qui sous-tend cette doctrine saute lui aussi aux yeux.

Cette conception occidentale classique de la laïcité devait résoudre le problème interne d'une religion unique, le christianisme, assortie de différentes sectes qui se livrent à des luttes acharnées. Elle semblait également reposer sur un rejet actif du rôle *public* de la religion, et sur une indifférence obligatoire, parfois res-

pectueuse, de l'Etat pour tout ce que fait l'intérieur, *privé*. Tant que cela demeure privé, l'Etat n'est pas censé s'en mêler.

Il est aujourd'hui de plus en plus évident que cette forme occidentale de laïcité

n'a pas été conçue pour des sociétés présentant une profonde diversité religieuse et qu'elle a du mal à composer avec des religions à orientation communautaire comme le catholicisme romain, l'islam, certaines formes d'hindouisme et de sikhisme qui revendiquent une présence dans l'espace public, en particulier lorsqu'elles commencent à cohabiter au sein d'une même société.

Ce laïcisme individualiste est, à plusieurs égards, trop fermé pour être largement accepté et il est de plus en plus contesté non seulement à l'extérieur des sociétés occidentales, mais aussi en leur sein. De fait, le modèle occidental de laïcisme est devenu une partie du problème.

Les solutions de rechange fondées sur la religion sont sans issue

N'y a-t-il rien de valable dans le modèle laïc occidental? Faut-il se tourner vers des Etats à caractère confessionnel, sur la fusion plutôt que la séparation de l'Etat et de la religion? Non, pas si nous sommes attachés à la liberté et à l'égalité. Historiquement, de tels Etats – comme ceux qui ont érigé en Eglises d'Etat l'Eglise anglicane en Angleterre ou l'Eglise catholique en Italie – ne chérissaient ni la liberté ni l'égalité. Ces Etats reconnaissaient comme religion officielle la doctrine religieuse particulière de cette Eglise, contraignaient les individus à ne fréquenter que celle-ci, les réprimaient

quand ils ne professaient pas un certain ensemble de ses croyances, levaient des impôts pour la financer et rendaient obligatoire l'enseignement de sa propre interprétation de la religion dans les établissements scolaires. On retrouvait dans ces Etats non seulement des inégalités entre les religions (les chrétiens et les juifs, par exemple) mais également entre les Eglises d'une même confession. Les sociétés dirigées par de tels Etats étaient fréquemment soit dévastées par des guerres de religions et des violences interconfessionnelles, soit gérées par les persécutions de groupes confessionnels minoritaires. Les Etats dotés d'une religion officielle n'ont pas changé de couleur avec le temps. Au Pakistan, par exemple, la quasi-consécration de la secte sunnite dominante comme religion d'Etat a conduit à la persécution, même pour les minorités musulmanes. Les Ahmedis, par exemple, ont été déclarés minorité non musulmane, et peuvent en conséquence être condamnés s'ils se déclarent musulmans ou appellent « mosquée » leur lieu de culte. L'Etat d'Israël souffre du même problème. En tant qu'Etat qui se déclare juif, il n'a pu qu'exclure, du moins en partie, de son régime de droits et d'avantages ses propres citoyens arabes, et d'autant plus les autres Palestiniens. Le statut conduit également à une véritable discrimination contre les adeptes de ses courants réformé et conservateur. Ce qui ne veut pas dire que tous les Etats laïcs soient préférables aux Etats à caractère confessionnel. Bien des Etats sont dissocies de la religion afin de mieux poursuivre le pouvoir, la richesse, ou les Etats machiavéliques – l'Etat colonial britannique en Inde, par exemple – qui se sont distancés de toutes les religions

La diversité religieuse dans les sociétés laïques : Un défi croissant

Les États laïcs et l'idéologie qui les sous-tend, le laïcisme politique, semblent sur la sellette depuis le dernier quart du 20^e siècle. Après le choc provoqué par l'instauration en 1979 de la première théocratie moderne en Iran, on a vu apparaître, à la fin des années 1980, des mouvements politiques islamiques en Égypte, au Soudan, en Algérie, en Tunisie, en Éthiopie, au Nigéria, au Tchad, au Sénégal, en Turquie, en Afghanistan, au Pakistan et même au Bangladesh.

Ces mouvements de contestation des États laïcs ne se limitent pas aux sociétés musulmanes. Des mouvements protestants antilaïcs sont apparus au Kenya, au Guatemala et aux Philippines. Le

Composer avec la diversité religieuse : Le modèle indien

Inde, ainsi que dans les diasporas au Canada et en Grande-Bretagne, se sont mis à remettre en question la séparation de la religion et de l'État. Même l'éthos largement humaniste et laïc de l'Europe occidentale n'est pas sorti indemne de ce courant de contestation. On a pu en voir des échos en Grande-Bretagne et en Allemagne, mais ce sont l'affaire du foulard islamique en France et l'assassinat du cinéaste Théo Van Gogh aux Pays-Bas qui l'ont souligné d'une façon spectaculaire. Les migrations en provenance des pays non occidentaux et l'intensification de la mondialisation ont amené dans l'espace public occidental des adeptes de religions préchrétiennes, du christianisme et de l'islam, ce qui a eu plusieurs effets cumulatifs : une diversité religieuse sans précédent historique dans l'Ouest, l'affaiblissement du monopole public de certaines religions, et l'émergence d'un climat de méfiance mutuelle, voire d'hostilité et de conflits à l'occasion.


Le modèle occidental de laïcisme : une partie du problème

Le laïcisme occidental peut-il se renouveler et composer avec la nouvelle réalité d'une présence de multiples religions dynamiques dans la vie publique et les tensions sociales qui l'accompagnent ? Dans une large mesure, le laïcisme occidental se définit lui-même comme une doctrine universelle exigeant une stricte séparation (exclusion mutuelle) de l'église/la religion et de l'État, au nom de la liberté et de l'égalité des personnes (y compris la liberté et l'égalité en matière d'appartenance religieuse).

fondamentalisme protestant est devenu une force de poids dans la vie politique américaine. Les nationalistes bouddhistes cinghalais au Sri Lanka, les nationalistes hindous en Inde, les religieux ultra-orthodoxes en Israël et les nationalistes sikhs dans l'État du Punjab en

1 Une version de ce texte (en anglais et en français) est publiée par le Centre international des droits de la personne et du développement démocratique, 2007, dans *Gouvernance et diversité : Des solutions démocratiques pour des sociétés multiculturelles*, sous la direction de Razmik Panossian, Bruce Berman et Anne Linscott. Kingston et Montréal; Gouvernance démocratique et ethnicité; Droits et démocratie.

rapport qu'elle a remis au gouvernement le 22 mai 2008⁶, la Commission soulevé plusieurs préoccupations : intégration des immigrants, identité québécoise, interculturalisme, langue française, rôle des médias, etc. Cependant, en se limitant à la question de la place de la religion dans l'espace public, qui est ici notre propos central, on peut constater que plusieurs des réflexions de la Commission rejoignent celles du CRI. C'est le cas, par exemple, lorsqu'elle traite de la définition de la laïcité ouverte, des balises pour la gestion des demandes d'ajustement dans les institutions publiques, de la formation des intervenants, de la lutte contre la discrimination religieuse et de la valorisation des efforts en milieux de travail.

Depuis que MM. Bouchard et Taylor ont rendu publiques leurs conclusions, les intellectuels québécois s'affrontent sur la signification profonde de leur rapport, sur ses propos et sur ses silences. Quelles suites connaîtra le rapport? La réponse est encore à venir mais, quel que soit son avenir, il constitue déjà, tout comme l'avis du CRI, le rapport Proulx sur l'école et la laïcité (Proulx, 1999) ou les travaux du Comité des affaires religieuses, une pierre de plus dans la construction d'une société laïque, ouverte et inclusive. 

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6 Pour obtenir une copie du rapport : <www.accommodements.qc.ca>

Bouchard et Charles Taylor.

Cependant, le débat entourant la question de l'accommodement raisonnable, loin de perdre de son intérêt, s'est intensifié, jusqu'à donner lieu à la création, en février 2007, de la Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles (CCPARDC), présidée par MM. Gérard

notion diffuser un guide de référence précisant le cadre légal de l'accommodement raisonnable et suggérant un processus de prise de décision approprié pour le traitement des demandes.⁵ De la formation sera aussi mise à la disposition des milieux sco-

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où la proximité d'un lieu de culte joue sur la valeur marchande des résidences situées en quartier résidentiel.

L'autorisation de construction d'un lieu de culte dépend essentiellement du règlement de zonage autorisant certains usages dans certaines zones. En l'absence de disponibilité de terrains pour la construction d'un lieu de culte, les requérants peuvent demander une modification du règlement de zonage au Conseil municipal qui s'en réfère à l'avis du Comité consultatif d'urbanisme. Dans les années 1990, plusieurs municipalités ont « gelé » leur règlement de zonage afin de restreindre les terrains où des lieux de culte auraient pu s'implanter de plein droit. D'autres municipalités adopteront un moratoire sur les lieux de culte. « *Ce changement, qui paraît de fait un sérieux frein à l'établissement de nouveaux lieux de culte, à moins que ces derniers ne réutilisent les anciennes églises catholiques (généralement surdimensionnées par rapport à la taille des nouvelles congrégations)* » (Germain et al., 2003, p. 27).

Les recommandations

Sur la base des éléments développés dans les sections précédentes, le CRI a formulé 27 recommandations, plusieurs adressées au gouvernement dans son ensemble, d'autres à la ministre de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles et certaines, plus spécifiques, au ministre de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, au ministre de la Santé et des Services sociaux ainsi qu'au monde municipal.

On peut résumer comme suit ses recommandations ayant une portée d'ordre général :

Éprouvent parfois de la difficulté à transférer leur expertise vers les personnes issues des nouvelles vagues migratoires. Ailleurs, dans plusieurs établissements hospitaliers par exemple, les services d'aumônerie se sont adaptés à la diversification des croyances et les prêtres catholiques ne sont plus les seuls à venir apporter du réconfort aux personnes qui en manifestent le besoin. De même, des efforts ont été faits pour que les lieux réservés au recueillement ne soient pas directement associés à une confession particulière et puissent être utilisés par les croyants de diverses religions.

Les municipalités

La diversification des pratiques religieuses (islam, sikhisme, hindouisme, bouddhisme) et l'apparition de nouveaux courants chrétiens (baptistes, adventistes, pentecôtistes) créent une demande croissante de construction de lieux de culte, de reconversion d'anciennes églises, d'agrandissement d'édifices religieux. On estime qu'en 2002, sur les 800 lieux de culte que compte l'île de Montréal, 35 % appartenaient à des communautés ou groupes ethnoreligieux. Le contexte de prolifération croissante des lieux de culte fait craindre aux municipalités une concentration des lieux de culte dans les quartiers résidentiels. Le marché immobilier pose la question du partage de l'espace dans un espace limité

ou aux droits des autres élèves ni, bien sûr, imposer des contraintes excessives à l'école sur le plan du fonctionnement ou du budget. Les solutions trouvées doivent aussi respecter la Loi de l'instruction publique ainsi que le Régime pédagogique, qui formulent à l'intention des directions d'écoles et des enseignants des exigences rigoureusement contraires à la nature même des interventions, parfois, la nature même des interventions, personnelles et axées sur les besoins de la personne, crée un contexte favorable à la négociation et permet souvent la résolution de conflits au cas-par-cas. Dans ce secteur, la question de la diversité religieuse ne semble pas se poser de façon spécifique : elle est davantage perçue comme une composante de la diversité culturelle. Le niveau de sensibilité des intervenants est cependant très variable. Ainsi, si des milieux multiculturels ont développé une expertise très poussée, d'autres semblent découvrir tout juste cette réalité. De plus, là où une approche sensible a été développée afin de répondre à la réalité d'un groupe numériquement plus nombreux (p. ex. : les Italiens à Saint-Léonard), les institutions

Le secteur de la santé

Il s'agit d'un secteur où les interventions s'avèrent délicates puisqu'elles concernent ces moments particulièrement sensibles de la vie humaine que sont la naissance, la souffrance et la mort. Toutefois, la nature même des interventions, parfois, la nature même des interventions, personnelles et axées sur les besoins de la personne, crée un contexte favorable à la négociation et permet souvent la résolution de conflits au cas-par-cas. Dans ce secteur, la question de la diversité religieuse ne semble pas se poser de façon spécifique : elle est davantage perçue comme une composante de la diversité culturelle. Le niveau de sensibilité des intervenants est cependant très variable. Ainsi, si des milieux multiculturels ont développé une expertise très poussée, d'autres semblent découvrir tout juste cette réalité. De plus, là où une approche sensible a été développée afin de répondre à la réalité d'un groupe numériquement plus nombreux (p. ex. : les Italiens à Saint-Léonard), les institutions

L'école joue un rôle de charnière entre la sphère privée et la sphère publique et en ce sens, se doit d'être ouverte aux communautés.

Aujourd'hui, la question qui se pose n'est pas tant de savoir « quand » ou « sur quoi » accommoder que de décider « jusqu'où » et « comment » le faire.

de les modifier de manière à composer avec les besoins propres à certains groupes ou personnes, afin de respecter leur droits à l'égalité » (Drapeau, 2001, p. 106). L'expression de la liberté de religion, y compris à travers la négociation d'un accommodement raisonnable, ne peut se traduire par le déni d'un autre droit protégé par la Charte. Autrement dit, une personne ne peut revendiquer l'exercice d'un droit s'il se trouve ainsi à léser celui d'une autre personne.

Le milieu scolaire

Par rapport à d'autres milieux où la diversité religieuse peut se manifester, l'école présente certaines spécificités : il ne s'agit pas ici d'une entreprise confrontée à la demande d'un employé ou d'un client exerçant ses droits en pleine connaissance de cause, mais bien de deux tiers, soit des parents et des éducateurs qui, de part et d'autre, souhaitent défendre les droits de l'enfant.

Dans un tel contexte, le parent est bien sûr légitimé d'exercer, au nom de son enfant, le droit à la liberté religieuse. Quant à l'intervenant, il peut aussi concevoir la demande comme une contrainte religieuse imposée à l'enfant et que l'école, en interdisant les pratiques religieuses, assure un espace de liberté à l'enfant (McAndrew, s.d.).

En fait, l'école joue un rôle de charnière entre la sphère privée et la sphère publique et en ce sens, se doit d'être ouverte aux accommodements. Aujourd'hui, la question qui se pose n'est pas tant de savoir « quand » ou « sur quoi » accommoder que de décider qu'il se dise en milieu scolaire, les balises existent et elles sont assez claires. Ainsi, à l'école comme ailleurs, l'accommodement ne devrait pas porter atteinte directement à d'autres droits de l'élève

• Un principe qui doit nécessairement s'appuyer sur les droits individuels. La laïcité constitue en effet un corollaire des droits et des libertés. Les individus, en tant que porteurs de croyances et de convictions, ont le droit, reconnu par les chartes, d'exercer leur liberté de conscience et de leur liberté de conscience et de leur religion et de l'exprimer dans l'espace public. La laïcité s'impose donc aux institutions, afin que les individus puissent jouir pleinement de leurs droits et de leurs libertés.

La laïcité ainsi définie se distingue du laïcisme, doctrine qui vise à expurger la religion, dans toutes ses manifestations, de l'ensemble de la sphère publique.

Les religions dans l'espace civique

Le cadre légal

Au Québec, la liberté de religion est un droit garanti par l'article 2 a) de la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés et l'article 3 de la Charte des droits et libertés de la personne du Québec. La liberté de religion est un droit individuel qui se traduit collectivement par le droit pour les membres d'une même religion de se réunir et de manifester leur foi. À partir de ce droit énoncé et protégé, les tribunaux ont rendu divers jugements qui ont contribué à édifier la jurisprudence sur laquelle les causes sont dorénavant évaluées.

Quant à l'obligation d'accommodement raisonnable, on peut le définir comme « l'obligation d'adapter une règle conçue pour une majorité, dans le but de répondre aux besoins spécifiques de certaines personnes ou d'un groupe afin que ceux-ci ne soient pas victimes de discrimination aux caractéristiques qui les différencient de la majorité. Cela implique de faire des exceptions aux règles générales ou

À partir des travaux de Micheline Milot et Jean Baubérot (2002), les définitions suivantes ont été retenues :

• La *sécularisation* s'applique au processus interne à une société par lequel le religieux perd peu à peu sa dimension englobante sous l'influence des autres champs sociaux (culture, économie, etc.). Le religieux peut demeurer pertinent pour les individus, mais ne peut plus s'imposer à l'ensemble de la société.

• La *laïcisation* concerne les démarches faites et voulues par l'État pour maintenir des rapports neutres avec les religions et pour empêcher les interventions directes des religions dans la gestion de l'État. Ces éléments seront formulés soit par voie constitutionnelle, soit par voie juridique, soit à travers le droit coutumier (Common Law).

• La *laïcité* décrit le résultat du processus de laïcisation. On peut la définir comme « un aménagement progressif des institutions sociales et politiques concernant la diversité des préférences morales, religieuses et philosophiques des citoyens. Par cet aménagement, la liberté de conscience et de religion se trouve garantie par un État neutre à l'égard des différentes conceptions de la vie bonne et ce, sur la base de valeurs communes rendant possible la rencontre et le dialogue. » (Comité sur les affaires religieuses, 2003, p. 21).

Ainsi, on peut voir la laïcité comme :
 • L'indépendance de l'État face aux religions, ainsi que l'autonomie de la religion par rapport au politique. Autrement dit, les religions n'exercent directement aucun pouvoir politique et l'État n'exerce aucun pouvoir religieux, laissant les Églises s'organiser librement dans l'espace public.

soutien financier direct de l'État. L'Espagne, après une période où le catholicisme était religion d'État, vient de reconnaître la religion musulmane. Le Canada constitue un cas à part, la Constitution étant pratiquement muette sur les rapports entre État et religion alors que pendant deux siècles, deux grandes religions y ont cohabité sans affrontements majeurs. Mentionnons que lors de son rapatriement en 1982, une référence à la suprématie de Dieu est apparue dans le préambule de la Constitution, mais que la Cour suprême n'y a jamais fait aucune référence dans ses jugements.

Mais qu'en est-il de la situation québécoise?

Le Québec et la dimension religieuse : une réalité en mouvement

La place de la religion au Québec : un peu d'histoire

Ancré dans le continent nord-américain et bénéficiant à la fois d'un héritage français et d'une influence britannique, le Québec se retrouve au confluent de plusieurs traditions fort différentes en matière de relations entre État et Églises. Ainsi, sous le Régime français, l'entée de la Nouvelle-France était interdite aux juifs et aux protestants. À la suite de la Conquête, en 1760, les Britanniques ont rapidement reconnu la liberté de culte aux catholiques afin d'éviter qu'ils ne s'allient aux Américains alors en guerre contre l'Angleterre. C'est ainsi que les catholiques de la « Province of Québec » se sont vus reconnus des droits dont les catholiques d'Irlande ne jouissent pas à l'époque.

3 On présente souvent la société québécoise de cette époque comme entièrement dominée par une Église catholique omnipotente capable d'imposer ses vues au pouvoir politique. Les travaux de Milor tendent plutôt à démontrer que si l'Église a eu un poids idéologique incontestable, l'État a su préserver ses prérogatives, même contre la volonté des autorités religieuses, notamment sur la question du droit de vote des femmes ou du mariage civil.

Cependant, la Révolte des Patriotes (1837), durement réprimée, et la signature de l'Acte d'union entre le Haut et le Bas-Canada (1840) vont transformer les relations entre le pouvoir colonial et la société canadienne française ainsi qu'entre le clergé et les élites politiques qui, à partir de cette époque et pour des raisons

stratégiques, deviendront des alliés objectifs. Les intérêts des Canadiens français seront, à partir de ce moment, intimement liés à ceux du clergé catholique, et ce, pour pratiquement le siècle suivant.

Cette situation ne sera pas modifiée lors de la signature de l'Acte de l'Amérique du Nord britannique en 1867. Cependant, après la Seconde Guerre mondiale, la mainmise de l'Église commence à s'effriter. Au tournant des années soixante, la Révolution tranquille se met en place, avec l'instauration d'un

État-providence québécois et la nationalisation de l'électricité. Des transformations culturelles et sociales se manifestent au même moment. On voit se confirmer la laïcisation accélérée des structures dirigées par l'Église, alors qu'on assiste par ailleurs à une redéfinition de l'identité. L'ancrage ethnico-religieux perd sa pertinence. Les « Canadiens-français » disparaissent, remplacés par les Québécois, dénomination qui peu à peu englobera ceux et celles qui sans être nés au Québec ont choisi d'y faire leur vie. La langue et la

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culture deviennent les éléments rassembleurs par excellence et les pôles de l'identité.

D'autres changements majeurs accompagnent cette transformation, notamment l'adoption en 1975 par l'Assemblée nationale de la Charte des droits et libertés de la personne et celle, en 1977, de la Charte de la langue française faisant du français la langue officielle du Québec et obligeant les enfants immigrants à fréquenter l'école française. Les années qui suivront seront donc marquées, entre autre phénomène, par la valorisation et l'expansion d'une culture des droits individuels, par l'adaptation des institutions québécoises à la diversité ethnoculturelle, ainsi que par la poursuite du processus de laïcisation de la société.

La laïcité au Québec

La laïcité au Québec se présente sous des traits différents de la laïcité française. Cette dernière, née avec la Révolution de 1789, en opposition avec un clergé allié à l'Ancien Régime, visait à instaurer un nouvel ordre social, alors que la laïcité québécoise peut s'appuyer sur une tradition démocratique bien établie. En France, la laïcité est une valeur que l'on défend, alors qu'au Québec, elle constitue une pratique qui n'a pas toujours porté son nom. Un effort s'impose donc afin de préciser le sens accordé à certains concepts, souvent utilisés comme des synonymes, mais qui correspondent à des réalités différentes.

Introduction

L'avis intitulé *Laïcité et diversité religieuse : l'approche québécoise* trouve son origine dans le contexte

particulier qui a suivi les attentats du 11 septembre 2001. À cette époque, des situations impliquant la diversité religieuse ont suscité de vives réactions au sein de la société québécoise. Mentionnons à titre d'exemple la demande d'un jeune sikh de porter son kirpan à l'école ou le renvoi d'une élève d'une école privée pour port du foulard islamique. De plus, le gouvernement allait devoir décider s'il reconduisait ou non la clause dérogatoire rendant possible l'enseignement religieux confessionnel catholique et protestant dans les écoles publiques, qui arrivait à échéance en juin 2005².

Laïcité et diversité religieuse : Toujours d'actualité

Ainsi, aujourd'hui en Occident, certains pays affirment dans leur constitution la séparation de l'État et de l'Église. C'est bien sûr le cas de la France, mais aussi des États-Unis, du Mexique, du Portugal et de la Turquie. D'autres maintiennent une religion d'État (Angleterre, Danemark, Finlande), tout en accordant une certaine reconnaissance aux autres cultes. Certains États (Belgique et Pays-bas) ont adopté le système dit officiellement reconnus et reçoivent un

Le présent article reprend la structure de cet avis, en résumé le contenu et les principales recommandations et le positionnement par rapport aux événements survenus depuis sa parution.

Religions et États

des modalités propres à chaque pays. Ces deux forces vont se distancier, selon divine. Cependant, au fil de l'histoire, détendant son autorité de la puissance l'Église étaient intimement liés, le roi miers siècles du christianisme, l'État et des dieux. En Europe, pendant les pré-lombienne, étaient considérés comme titivité ou l'Inca en Amérique préco-souverains, tels le Pharaon pendant l'Anc-confondues. Ainsi, par exemple, certains notions se sont en fait pratiquement variées. À certaines époques, ces deux États adopte des formes et des aspects sensée, la relation entre les religions et les régime politique et les forces en pré-Selon les époques, les régions, le type de

1 En 2004, à titre d'agent de recherche employé par le Conseil des relations interculturelles (CRI), Mme Therrien a rédigé l'avis *Laïcité et diversité religieuse : l'approche québécoise*. Elle occupe aujourd'hui des fonctions similaires au ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles (MICC) du Québec. Le présent article, écrit à titre personnel, n'engage en rien ni le CRI ni le MICC.

Le Conseil des relations interculturelles (CRI) est un organisme de recherche et de consultation qui a pour mission de conseiller la ministre de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles sur toutes les questions concernant l'intégration des immigrants et les relations interculturelles.

Déposé à la ministre de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles le 26 mars 2004, l'avis est accessible sur le site du CRI à l'adresse < www.conseilinterculturel.gouv.qc.ca >.

2 La loi 118 (*Loi modifiant diverses dispositions législatives dans le secteur de l'éducation concernant la confessionnalité*), adoptée en 2000, abrogeait le statut confessionnel des écoles publiques, primaires et secondaires mais permettait aussi le maintien des seuls enseignements catholique et protestant dans les écoles publiques du Québec. Or, selon la Charte, aucune religion ne devrait bénéficier de privilèges inaccessibles aux autres. Le gouvernement a donc dû avoir recours à une clause dérogatoire pour soustraire sa loi à l'autorité des chartes. La Charte fédérale limitant à 5 ans la durée d'une telle clause, c'est en juin 2005 que le gouvernement devait de nouveau statuer sur la question de l'enseignement religieux à l'école.

organismes caritatifs religieux lorsque la prestation de leurs services était libre de prosélytisme et d'appui gouvernemental.

Le modèle quatre n'appuierait pas cependant les initiatives confessionnelles et communautaires de l'ex-administration Bush, un ensemble d'initiatives de quelques milliards de dollars favorisant et finançant abondamment l'administration de services sociaux publics par des organisations religieuses selon des modalités qui inquiéteraient bon nombre de citoyens tant religieux que non religieux à propos de la religion au centre du gouvernement et du gouvernement au centre de la religion. La publication de la Maison-blanche sous l'administration Bush *Partnering with the Federal Government* prévoyait que les organismes religieux recevaient une aide financière du gouvernement pour inviter leurs clients à leurs services et événements religieux. Ils pouvaient même organiser des activités religieuses, par exemples des prières, en présence de leurs clients; ainsi, ils pouvaient proposer une prière avant d'offrir un repas à la soupe populaire. De plus, ceux qui animent la prière, et qui sont payés avec les impôts des contribuables, pouvaient même voir leurs compétences d'emploi évaluées en fonction de leur allégeance religieuse. Les clients de ces services sociaux sont souvent soumis au prosélytisme et les quelques interdictions qui existent à l'égard du prosélytisme ne sont pas appliquées par le gouvernement.

Le modèle quatre par contre appuierait les programmes fédéraux avec lesquelles les religieux qui interdisent formellement toute forme de prosélytisme et de discrimination dans l'embauche. C'est un appui qui est conforme au principe de base du modèle : accueillir l'expression religieuse dans l'arène publique et politique mais désavouer l'aide financière et les gestes de l'État qui font la promotion de la religion.

Religion, démocratie et modernité : un pas en avant

Qui plus est, bien que la réduction du conflit ne soit pas le principal objectif du modèle quatre, il semble raisonnable de s'attendre à ce que la reconnaissance et le respect de nos différences sur les tribunes publique et politique mènent à une société dont les liens sont plus serrés. Accueillir toute une gamme d'opinions diversifiées n'est pas seulement la voie indiquée, légalement et moralement. Ce pourrait être la façon la plus stratégique de puiser à une grande source de puissance, bien qu'encre inexploitée, de nos sociétés démocratiques pluralistes : la vitalité de leur diversité.

Bien que le modèle quatre puisse convenir aux États-Unis ainsi qu'à d'autres sociétés démocratiques, il devra être adapté aux circonstances historiques et sociales des diverses sociétés et à leurs institutions, leurs luttes, leurs idéaux et leurs aspirations. Ainsi, la province de Québec qui dans les années 1960 s'est cartérement distancée d'un modèle social longtemps établi — une version du modèle un — qui accordait un pouvoir politique important à une confession particulière (catholique romaine), peut décider d'établir des bornes empêchant quelque religion que ce soit de monopoliser le pouvoir politique, tout en prévoyant des institutions et des lieux officiels laissant place à l'expression religieuse, dont le catholicisme romain, pour exprimer des perspectives appartenant à la vie commune de la société d'ensemble.

Quelle que soit la nature de l'adaptation, la présence de la religion dans la société moderne clarifie l'importance de relever le défi démocratique constant posé par la façon de composer avec la diversité religieuse et de la respecter — mais non pas de la privilégier — dans l'arène publique

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Cet article a voulu montrer que les sociétés ne doivent pas tenter de se protéger contre la division et le conflit en tentant (ce qu'elles ne réussiront probablement pas) de tenir la religion à l'écart de ces tribunes. Alors que certains n'aiment pas entendre un discours religieux occupant une place importante (et peut-être sans cesse croissante) sur la place publique, les risques associés aux tentatives de supprimer l'expression des opinions religieuses sont infiniment plus élevés que ceux qui consistent à accueillir cette expression. C'est une attitude qui se situe au cœur de la promesse d'une démocratie dynamique où la diversité des perspectives influe sur les projets communs. ●

référence à l'excellence du monde naturel et à l'obligation biblique de protéger la création – une obligation qui à leurs yeux exige une action politique. Ainsi, on peut s'attendre à ce que le *Evangelical Environmental Network*, qui se préoccupe de la relation entre les ouragans, les changements climatiques et les pauvres, poursuive ses activités de lobbying auprès du Congrès pour faire adopter des lois endiguant le réchauffement de la planète.

Le modèle quatre favorise l'expression sur la place publique de ces voix évangéliques et de leurs arguments religieux géologiques et de leurs arguments religieux sur les politiques environnementales. Mais il ne permettrait pas cependant que le gouvernement finance les groupes évangéliques pour qu'ils administrent des programmes environnementaux, si ces groupes prônaient un point de vue diversifié de cette façon. Si les programmes de recyclage, les projets d'élimination du mercure ou de réductions des émissions de carbone sont justifiés parce qu'ils réduisent la pollution, de l'obligation biblique de prendre soin de l'environnement, ils seraient considérés comme une forme institutionnelle de promotion de la religion par l'État. Le modèle quatre n'interdit pas toute forme d'aide financière provenant du gouvernement à l'égard de programmes reposant sur la foi (ce type d'aide financière a plusieurs précédents instaurés avant l'administration Bush). Mais le modèle veillerait à interdire le financement de programmes où les services accordés sont liés à une justification ou un message religieux.

Bien qu'il n'y ait pas de directives précises sur l'application de l'interdiction formulée dans le premier amendement, son intention est claire : le gouvernement doit s'abstenir d'endosser et d'appuyer explicitement le prosélytisme religieux. L'histoire nous apprend que cette interdiction n'a pas forcément empêché le gouvernement de financer des débats publics et de leur donner une place publique. La distinction est cruciale et reflète l'esprit du modèle quatre : on interdit à l'État de promouvoir toute forme de religion mais on lui permet d'encadrer son étude, donc de fournir une tribune à la diversité religieuse. En fait, les deux mesures – interdire la prière à l'école et enseigner aux étudiants les diverses traditions religieuses – concourent à donner une puissante formation, enseignant aux étudiants comment vivre, travailler, jouer et débattre dans une société pluraliste. L'étude de la diversité de cette façon constitue l'une de nos meilleures voies vers une plus grande forme de compréhension et de tolérance sur la question religieuse.

Si l'on veut s'attarder maintenant sur une application différente du modèle, on peut examiner la participation des évangéliques au débat public et politique sur les questions du changement climatique et d'autres enjeux environnementaux. Les organismes évangéliques chrétiens sont devenus très critiques de l'ex-administration Bush en matière d'environnement. Un nombre de plus en plus important de ces chrétiens conservateurs ont présenté sur la place publique des arguments théologiques particuliers sur les politiques environnementales qui font la religion, c'est-à-dire des cours qui étudient la religion comme sujet de recherche et d'analyse. La distinction est cruciale et reflète l'esprit du modèle quatre : on interdit à l'État de promouvoir des débats publics et politiques; le modèle un présume que la religion traditionnelle aux États-Unis, si on lui laisse libre cours, assure l'épanouissement moral de la nation.

Bien que le modèle quatre, *Rayage public en tant que topographie diversifiée*, ne vise pas à initier des conflits initiaux et souhaite plutôt de contribuer à l'harmonie la où elle est nécessaire, il s'attarde plus à respecter le premier amendement de la Constitution (Le Congrès ne fera aucune loi qui touche l'établissement d'une religion ou qui en interdise le libre exercice) qu'à diminuer la discorde sociale.

Ce modèle ne fait aucune prédiction quant à savoir si le fait de reconnaître et d'accommoder une topographie publique diversifiée produira plus de conflits ou générera une plus grande harmonie. Dans certains, on pourrait voir croître la division et dans d'autres, l'entente. Mais l'harmonie, souvent un objectif souhaitable, n'est pas habituellement la question dominante. On accorde plus d'importance aux échanges et aux débats ouverts et à la participation aux institutions démocratiques.

Le modèle laisse place aux discours religieux sur la place publique et dans le débat politique, tout en désavouant le financement public et toute autre action gouvernementale pouvant provoquer une religion en particulier. Le modèle semble donc appuyer dans une grande mesure les décisions de la Cour suprême des États-Unis formulées depuis les années 1960 et qui ont, d'une part, interdit la prière à l'école favorisée par l'État et, d'autre part, permis aux écoles publiques d'offrir des cours sur la

intenses s'inspirant de l'histoire de la nation, de ses textes fondateurs, de ses monuments, de ses idéaux, etc. Bien qu'un exposé complet sur la religion civile ne constitue pas l'objet du présent article, le modèle dont il est présenté ment question découle directement de notre réflexion sur la place de la religion sur la scène publique. Si le modèle présente quelque plausibilité que ce soit, c'est en laissant entendre que la religion – maintenant comprise à la façon durkheimienne, c'est-à-dire comme un ensemble de croyances et pratiques communes qui tissent le lien moral d'un groupe – aura *toujours* sa place sur la scène publique et politique.

Ce modèle donne une complexité particulière et utile à la question de la religion et de la vie publique. Ceux qui sont pour, ainsi que ceux qui sont contre, la profession de la foi religieuse dans la vie publique présentent souvent la religion comme un ensemble clairement défini de croyances et de pratiques. Les frontières entre les domaines séculier et religieux semblent claires et sans ambiguïté. Un des mérites de ce troisième modèle est son refus d'accepter cette frontière trop nette. Aux termes de ce modèle, l'expression « religion séculière » bien qu'étrange, n'est pas un oxymore. En outre, le modèle tient facilement compte des diverses alliajes d'expressions religieuses formulées en public. C'est ainsi que l'on peut justifier la façon dont Martin Luther King Jr. pouvait – en toute cohérence et à l'intérieur d'une même phrase – évoquer le caractère sacré des droits de la personne (implorant la religion civile) et la dignité des humains créés à l'image de Dieu (implorant la théologie traditionnelle). Le modèle donc, nous amène non seulement à remettre en question une distinction facile et rapide entre « séculier » et « religieux » et entre « raison publique » et

« raison privée » mais il porte aussi l'attention sur différents types d'expressions religieuses formulées en public.

Le modèle n'est pas sans problème. *Sur le plan conceptuel*, il s'appuie sur une large définition de la religion, à un point tel que presque chaque symbole public d'importance, chaque rituel et chaque principe pourrait être considéré comme religieux. *Sur le plan politique*, certains craignent que la religion civile contribue à former une idolaîtrie nationale ou qu'elle sanctionne, en les sanctifiant, les idéologies et les aspirations nationalistes. Dans le cadre limité comme celui de cet article cependant, le modèle ajoute une certaine complexité utile à un débat qui serait autrement demeuré simpliste sur la place de la religion dans le monde moderne et plus particulièrement, de la religion dans la vie publique des sociétés démocratiques.

4) Le paysage public en tant que topographie diversifiée

Le nom attribué à ce modèle évite intentionnellement toute référence au mot « religion » parce que le modèle *n'aborde pas initialement la religion comme un cas particulier*. Dans ce modèle, on ne détermine pas à l'avance qui peut parler, ni quels genres d'arguments l'on peut formuler dans l'arène publique et politique. L'hypothèse de travail laisse présumer que l'expression publique varie normalement dans sa forme et son contenu. Certaines expressions peuvent être explicitement religieuses; d'autres peuvent être explicitement non religieuses et être explicitement non religieuses. Mais ces distinctions sont sans importance, dans le cadre du présent modèle, puisque aucune *voix n'est traitée comme un cas particulier*. Aux termes de la liberté de conscience et de parole, *chaque voix* est un cas particulier digne d'être entendu.

Ce modèle ne fait aucune prédiction quant à savoir si le fait de reconnaître et d'accommoder une topographie

publique diversifiée produira plus de conflits ou générera une plus grande harmonie. Dans certains, on pourrait voir croître la division et dans d'autres, l'entente. Mais l'harmonie, souvent un objectif souhaitable, n'est pas habituellement la question dominante. On accorde plus d'importance aux échanges et aux débats ouverts et complets et à la participation aux institutions démocratiques.

Or, après avoir indiqué de quelles façons la religion ne doit pas être traitée comme un cas particulier, le modèle reconnaît que, jusqu'à un certain point, la religion *peut* être un thème particulier dans certaines sociétés (à la lumière de leurs propres circonstances socio-historiques). Compte tenu de l'histoire de la religion aux États-Unis, qui inclut à la fois des persécutions et des renouveau religieux, le peuple américain tend à être à la fois religieux et méfiant face à l'autorité religieuse. Il existe des enjeux particulièrement lourds liés à la religion aux États-Unis sur lesquels on ne s'arrêterait pas dans d'autres sociétés. Différentes sociétés ont des vécus et des préoccupations différentes. Dans la société américaine, l'association d'une croyance ou d'une pratique à la religion suffit parfois à susciter la controverse si elle apparaît sur la place publique, au gouvernement ou en éducation. La raison d'une telle situation découle en partie du fait que les Américains ont tiré des leçons de prudence de leur histoire religieuse.

Les adhérents à chacun des modèles décrits ci-dessus luttent d'une façon ou d'une autre avec la question de la religion et du conflit. Et alors que chaque modèle présente ses mérites, chacun rend aussi à poser des hypothèses contestables sur la façon de désamorcer les conflits possibles associés à la religion. Le modèle trois (dans certaines versions) présume de l'existence d'une religion civile nationale répandue et complète. Le modèle deux présume de la viabilité d'éliminer

- 2 Voir Stout, p. 64, où il déclare : [traduction] « Je veux encourager les citoyens engagés sur le plan religieux à utiliser leur liberté fondamentale pour exprimer leurs prémisses de façon aussi détaillée et approfondie qu'ils le jugent à propos lorsqu'ils raisonnent avec nous sur des enjeux qui préoccupent la société. S'ils ne sont pas encouragés à s'exprimer de cette façon, nous ne connaîtrons jamais les véritables raisons qui motivent bon nombre de nos citoyens à tirer certaines conclusions éthiques et politiques. »
- 3 Pour un traitement plus complet, et à mon avis le plus utile, de la pensée de Rawls sur la religion et la raison publique, voir l'écrit de Jeffrey Stout *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 65-77.
- 4 Nous ne laissons pas entendre ici que Rawls aurait voulu interdire légalement le raisonnement religieux du débat public; tout comme Korten, il propose un argument qui, souhàte-t-il, amènera les gens à adopter volontairement son approche. Et bien que je ne sois pas d'accord avec la notion de Rawls sur la raison publique s'appliquant à la plupart des citoyens, j'estime que les dirigeants élus et les juges devraient adopter quelque chose qui s'en approche.

La restriction rawlsienne sur l'argumentation religieuse est inquiétante à plusieurs égards :

- *Psychologiquement*, il n'est pas évident que les gens puissent dissocier à un tel point des aspects de leur identité.
- *Politiquement*, il n'est pas évident que l'intérêt public soit bien servi lorsque l'on exige de certains citoyens qu'ils cachent leurs motifs *véritables* lorsqu'ils prennent position publi-

Au début de sa carrière, Rawls semblait partager le souhait de Korten voulant que la religion demeure à l'écart de la vie publique. Mais plus tard, dans *Political Liberalism*, Rawls s'est opposé au débat religieux public seulement lorsqu'on abordait « des enjeux constitutionnels essentiels et des questions de justice fondamentale ». Quoi qu'il en soit, tant dans la version restrictive de cette perspective que dans la moins restrictive, les citoyens dont la perspective est inspirée par la religion seraient tenus de s'abstenir de faire allusion à un aspect profond de leur identité lorsqu'ils participent à des débats politiques importants.

Les spécialistes de la religion font généralement preuve de peu de patience à l'égard de la tentative de Friedrich Schleiermacher d'établir un pacte de non-agression entre la religion et la modernité en plaçant l'éthique, la science et la religion dans des sphères distinctes et protégées. Pourquoi devraient-ils se montrer plus patients avec le geste de ségrégation semblable de Korten dans le seul but de tenir la religion à l'écart de la vie publique et politique?

Le noble espoir des Lumières envers la raison publique devrait peut-être être reformulé, non pas en fonction de l'option de Rawls selon laquelle la raison publique devrait renchérir sur la raison non publique, mais en tant qu'espoir d'un processus politique démocratique vivant et bouillonnant de discussions libres et ouvertes. Cette méthode d'échanges, cette autre vision de la raison publique, soit le public (les citoyens) *raisonnant* entre eux – n'est pas restreinte de prime abord par ce que « l'on pour-rait raisonnablement s'attendre à voir raisonnablement endossé » par tous (Rawls, 1996 : 1)⁴. Le processus recon-naît plutôt que ce qu'il est raisonnable d'endosser est discutable en soi et que certaines voix du débat ne sont pas toujours perçues comme raisonnables par les autres interlocuteurs. On peut considérer que ce processus débridé va au cœur d'une démocratie qui honore la diversité, l'égalité et la liberté de conscience. La réussite de la démocratie ne consiste pas, en bout de ligne, à produire « le raisonnable » comme l'entend Rawls, mais à favoriser un débat inclusif et ouvert sur des enjeux d'importance publique.

3) Le paysage public en tant qu'espace religieux

Selon ce modèle, la santé d'une société dépend d'une religion civile commune et répandue, soit d'un ensemble de croyances et de pratiques morales

qui donnent pour permettre à la raison publique de s'afficher pleinement. Ainsi, le seul argument religieux permis et auquel on peut se fier est celui qui aurait pu initialement être désigné en d'autres termes, soit en termes de raison publique. Et

• *D'un point de vue épistémologique*, il n'est pas évident que ce que Rawls appelle la « raison publique » puisse en fait être considérée comme la « raison des citoyens » c'est-à-dire comme un type inclusif de délibération que l'on peut croire acceptable par toute personne raisonnable.

• Ce doute épistémologique est intensifié, et non atténué, par Rawls, dans son introduction à l'édition de poche de *Political Liberalism*, qui permet aux doctrines religieuses dans leur ensemble de faire partie de la raison publique, pourvu que [traduction] « en temps voulu, la raison publique... soit présentée de façon suffisamment détaillée pour appuyer tout ce qu'on a cherché à appuyer en invoquant ces doctrines » (Rawls, 1996 : 11-113). Cette nouvelle concession signi-fie essentiellement ceci : *un argument revêtu d'un voile religieux est permis, pourvu qu'il se dévante à un moment donné pour permettre à la raison publique de s'afficher pleinement*. Ainsi, le seul argument religieux permis et auquel on peut se fier est celui qui aurait pu initialement être désigné en d'autres termes, soit en termes de raison publique. Et

• *juridiquement*, il n'est pas évident que l'on puisse en pratique tirer une ligne utile et valable entre « des questions de justice fondamentale » et toutes les autres questions de justice (qui y sont reliées quoique dans une moindre mesure) et la nature et la constitution de nos institutions publiques.

quement et qu'ils invoquent seule-ment les motifs permis par la perspective rawlsienne?

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Cet article explore le rôle et la place de la religion dans les sociétés démocratiques contemporaines, particulièrement dans la vie publique et politique de l'Amérique du Nord. Nous vivons à une époque où

nombreux sont ceux qui, tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur du milieu universitaire, pensent à la religion et en parlent, notamment au sujet du rôle, si bien en est que le discours religieux doit jouer sur la place publique. Nous explorons ici le sujet en proposant quatre modèles : 1) *La religion comme élément intégral du paysage public* (où la religion est nécessaire à la santé de la vie publique et politique); 2) *Banissement de la religion du paysage public* (où la religion est gardée à l'écart du discours publique et politique); 3) *Le paysage public en tant qu'espace religieux* (où la santé de la société dépend d'une religion civile commune); 4) *Le paysage*

Le rôle et la place du discours religieux dans une société démocratique

public en tant que topographie diversifiée (où les opinions religieuses ne sont pas initialement traitées comme des par-ticuliers mais sont plutôt considérées comme toute autre perspective plus ou moins complète pouvant s'intégrer au débat public et politique).

L'article fait ressortir le modèle quatre comme étant celui qui convient le mieux aux pays démocratiques. Il estime notamment que les risques associés aux

tentatives d'interdiction de l'expression publique de la foi religieuse sont immensément plus grands que ceux associés à l'accueil de cette expression.

Par la suite, l'article applique le modèle à deux enjeux concrets : la prière en classe favorisée par l'Etat et l'aide financière gouvernementale aux services fournis par les groupes religieux. Bien que les modèles présentés soient articulés dans le milieu politique et culturel de l'auteur (les Etats-Unis), ils peuvent s'appliquer largement à d'autres contextes.

Survivance du discours religieux dans les démocraties : quatre modèles

1) La religion comme élément intégral du paysage public

Selon ce modèle, les professions de foi publiques sont essentielles à la santé de la vie publique et politique des Etats-Unis et des autres démocraties modernes. Elles sont nécessaires parce qu'elles inculquent les vertus qui sont essentielles au maintien d'une citoyenneté vigoureuse. On songe ici à la justice, au raisonnement moral, au courage ou à l'humilité, ou encore à l'espoir ou à l'amour. Selon ce modèle, si la foi religieuse et ses vertus sont exclues de la vie publique, la santé morale du pays se détériore.

Le modèle est couramment associé à une foi religieuse traditionnelle et conservatrice mais des types de foi politiquement progressistes s'y intègrent également. Certains estiment que la force de la démocratie des Etats-Unis repose sur les croyances et les pratiques des formes progressistes du christianisme, du judaïsme et, de nos jours, de l'islam. Lorsqu'une société ne puise pas à l'élan religieux qui nourrit et inspire l'esprit humain, les droits humains, la protection des marginaux et de

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Osterhammel, Jürgen, and Niels P. Petersson. 2005. *Globalization : A Short History*. (traduction : Dona Gevert) Princeton : Princeton University Press.

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ter aux relations intergouvernementales, une diplomatie à multiples volets qui tient compte de la religion révèle comment les minorités religieuses et ethniques d'un pays peuvent jouer un rôle plus actif dans la politique étrangère de leur pays.

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sont une cause de l'instabilité politique ou si elles donnent plutôt à la jeunesse le pouvoir d'amener des changements sociaux et d'agir politiquement dépend d'une gamme d'autres facteurs. Certains d'entre eux sont intérieurs : une répression étatique, une récession économique, plus simplement, des politiques économiques défavorables et contraignantes. D'autres ont une résonance internationale : les politiques d'aide étrangère, le soutien aux droits de la personne, les lois internationales, les relations intergouvernementales.

Conclusion

La religion divise le monde autant qu'elle y tisse des liens par des voies inédites qui représentent de nouveaux défis pour la paix, la sécurité et la prospérité, tant à l'échelle du pays que du monde. Dans divers pays du monde, la mondialisation contribue à tisser des liens entre le mondial et le local, favorisant l'émergence de nouvelles identités et renforçant les anciennes, notamment celles qui relient et relient différentes diasporas religieuses à l'échelle mondiale. Ces réseautages entre milieux local et mondial et ces diasporas sont en train de transformer les débats de politique intérieure relatifs à la nature des relations raciales, aux droits des minorités et aux relations multiconfessionnelles. Dans un même temps, ils suscitent de nouveaux types de défis pour la sécurité internationale, car des diasporas religieuses et des acteurs non étatiques tant ethniques que religieux – de diverses traditions religieuses – arrivent à faire progresser certains de leurs objectifs politiques par le biais du terrorisme.

À l'ère de la mondialisation, les gouvernements doivent relever le défi de trouver comment la diversité religieuse pourra leur servir de ressource pour mener leur politique étrangère. Tablant sur la société civile plutôt que de se limi-

des communautés représentée une menace *potentielle* pour la stabilité politique et la stabilité religieuse; par exemple, au Liban, la minorité chiite constitue la classe marginale traditionnelle, mais son taux de natalité est supérieur à celui de la communauté chrétienne mixte. Toutefois, la complexité de la situation politique au Liban, les alliances militaires interconfessionnelles et ainsi de suite pose des défis évidents à toute tentative d'établir des liens entre la politique, la religion et la démographie (Jenkins, 2002, p. 192-196).

Enfin, dans l'avenir, les conflits intérieurs de la société seront probablement marqués par des tendances sociales susceptibles de renforcer le type d'identités culturelles ou religieuses fragmentaires facilitées par la mondialisation. On avance souvent que les pays du Sud connaissent d'énormes pressions sociales attribuables à une explosion démographique de la jeunesse (*youth bulge*), soit une immense cohorte de jeunes hommes adultes (de 16 à 30 ans) censée contribuer à l'agitation sociale, aux guerres civiles et au terrorisme. On a attribué à de telles explosions démographiques les émeutes qui ont opposé des hindous et des musulmans en Inde. Les jeunes seraient attirés par les groupes radicaux dans tout le monde islamique et alimenteront les guerres civiles qui sévissent en Afrique occidentale, avec leur recours généralisé aux enfants soldats. Cependant, mis à part les stéréotypes sexuels sur lesquels repose la théorie de l'explosion de la jeunesse, la question de savoir si de telles explosions

gieux, il faut que d'autres facteurs soient présents : l'inégalité économique, les persécutions religieuses, la discrimination. En outre, en lien avec la mondialisation, l'aspect intégrant et homogénéisant de celle-ci peut compromettre un développement authentique, c'est-à-dire, pour ces communautés, un développement et une modernisation ancrés dans leurs propres traditions religieuses et culturelles plutôt que dans les formes occidentales de la modernisation (Fox, 2004). Ainsi, ce n'est pas l'existence d'une diversité religieuse qui contribue aux conflits en tant que telle, mais la façon dont la mondialisation risque de provoquer l'effondrement des identités religieuses et d'induire une discrimination politique fondée sur la religion. À cet égard, l'Indonésie constitue un contre-exemple : cette démocratie islamique où fleurissent une presse libre, une société civile vivante et un mouvement féministe islamique actif peut servir de modèle à un nouveau type de développement et de modernisation islamique (Hefner, 2000, p. 20).

Il faut aussi reconnaître que le potentiel de violence interconfessionnelle pourrait être attribuable non seulement à la taille relative (en termes stratiques) de chacun des groupes religieux (au-delà du seuil de 10 à 20 p. 100 d'écart entre les minorités), mais aussi à l'écart entre les taux de natalité des minorités religieuses ou (ce qui est plus délicat) aux conversions massives associées au prosélytisme. Jenkins peut donc raisonnablement avancer que l'écart entre les taux de natalité et de croissance démographique

étroite. C'est dans ces « pays déchirés », comme les appelle Jenkins (l'Égypte, le Soudan, la Nigéria, la Malaisie, les Philippines et l'Indonésie; tableau 3), que se sont déjà produits des épisodes prolongés ou intermittents de violence entre chrétiens et musulmans. Cette étroite marge sur le plan des populations et des pouvoirs a aussi déjà mis le feu aux poudres, contre toute attente, lors de récents affrontements entre musulmans et chrétiens au Kenya, où ces tensions sont intermittentes, et en Côte d'Ivoire, où elles étaient presque inexistantes jusqu'à récemment.

D'après Jenkins, il semble que les principaux points de conflits soient des États dont les minorités représentent de 10 à 20 p. 100 de la population, une proportion suffisante pour s'opposer aux politiques visant l'homogénéisation religieuse ou pour soutenir la lutte armée contre un gouvernement répressif. Par ailleurs, comme Thomas (p. 14) le signale à propos de l'Inde et de l'Indonésie, il arrive que la polarisation démographique entre deux religions se situe dans certaines régions, même lorsqu'une religion prédomine dans l'ensemble du pays. Jenkins estime qu'en 2050, pas moins de 10 États parmi les 25 plus importants au monde pourraient être divisés entre chrétiens et musulmans (l'écart entre ces minorités religieuses situant entre 10 et 20 p. 100). Compte tenu des tendances actuelles, chacun de ces pays pourrait être la scène de conflits entre musulmans et chrétiens.

Le tableau 3 dresse la liste des pays qui présentent un *potentiel* de déchirement (là où un groupe religieux minoritaire représente 10 à 20 p. 100 de la population, soit le point critique de Jenkins). Ce qui est toutefois remarquable, c'est qu'il n'y ait pas déjà eu davantage de conflits entre chrétiens et musulmans. D'évidence, avant que la polarisation démographique suscite un conflit reli-

cartacures pour affirmer la crédibilité de leur discours islamique auprès des leurs.

Deuxièmement, en raison de la résurgence mondiale de la religion (traînée dans Thomas, p. 14), un certain nombre de sociétés se trouvent mêlées à une sorte de *Kulturkampf*, un combat culturel imprégné de théologie et de politique qui se déroule aux *frontières* du sacré, du séculier et du politique dans la vie commune. Les revendications identitaires s'intègrent ainsi à leur politique intérieure (en plus de colorer leurs relations internationales). Ce phénomène peut se produire en premier lieu, lorsque des adhérents à une tradition religieuse tentent d'obtenir que la nation X se déclare une nation musulmane ou chrétienne (comme au Nigeria et en Zambie) ou encore bouddhiste (comme au Sri Lanka et en Thaïlande). À titre d'exemple, l'ancien président de la Zambie, l'évangélique Frederick Chiluba, a cherché à favoriser cette confession en croissance en déclarant que le pays était une nation chrétienne (par opposition aux Églises prédominantes et à son importante minorité musulmane). Au Nigeria, les tensions entre chrétiens et musulmans se sont exacerbées lorsque le pays a décidé d'adhérer à l'Organisation de la Conférence islamique. En Thaïlande, les pressions exercées par les moines pour faire reconnaître le bouddhisme au titre de religion nationale ont avivé la résurgence islamique dans les régions du sud du pays à prédominance musulmane.

Enfin, l'identité religieuse peut allumer les conflits dans des pays démographiquement polarisés entre deux religions, lorsque la marge entre les populations qui s'en réclament et les pouvoirs qu'elles détiennent, est

TABLEAU 3
Des pays déchirés : les risques de tensions entre chrétiens et musulmans dans un monde en mondialisation (part démographique des principales religions mondiales, en pourcentage)

Pays	Christianisme	Islam	Hindouisme	Judaïsme	Religion multiple ou autre
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Albanie	30	70			
Bangladesh		83	16		
Bénin	30	20			50
Bosnie-Herzégovine	46	40			14
Bulgarie	84	12			
Burkina Faso	10	50			
Burundi	67	10			
Cameroon	40	20			40
Chypre	82	18			
Congo	50	2			48
Côte d'Ivoire	20-30	35-40			25-40
Égypte	10	90			
Éthiopie	35-40	45-50			12
Ghana	63	16			21
Ile-Maurice	32	17	48		
Inde	2	13	81		2
Indonésie	8	88	2		1
Israël	2	16			77
Kazakhstan	46	47			
Liban	39	60			
Libéria	40	20			40
Macédoine	32	17			
Malawi	80	13			4
Nigeria	40	50			
Ouganda	66	16			18
Ouzbékistan	9	88			
République centrafricaine	50	15			35
Russie	15-22	10-15			
Soudan	5	70			25
Tanzanie	30	35			35
Zanzibar		99			
Tchad	35	51			14
Togo	29	20			51
Turkménistan	9	89			2
Zambie	50-75	24-49*			1

*Islam et hindouisme confondus
Source : CIA (2008)

pentecôtistes – le Brésil, l'Inde et la Chine (voir Thomas, à la page 14) – sont au cœur de la thèse selon laquelle le Brésili, la Russie, l'Inde et la Chine (le BRIC) sont les grandes puissances de l'avenir, puisque leurs économies se développent rapidement et que d'ici 2050, ils pourraient éclipser la plupart des pays actuels. Une diplomatie qui tient compte de la religion reconnaît que si la religion fait partie du problème des conflits internationaux, il faut aussi qu'elle fasse partie de la solution. C'est avec cette conception plus large de la diplomatie que, fortes des liens sociaux et commerciaux qu'elles ont avec leurs diasporas de par le monde, les minorités ethniques ou religieuses d'un pays peuvent devenir une ressource efficace pour la politique étrangère des pays occidentaux. Une telle démarche est non seulement profitable à la cohésion sociale des pays d'accueil occidentaux, où les membres de ces diasporas sont d'ordinaire considérés comme un actif à plusieurs titres, mais peut aussi aider leur pays d'adoption à atteindre ses objectifs de politique étrangère : promouvoir le commerce, l'investissement, les droits de la personne, l'égalité des sexes, la liberté religieuse, etc.

Quatrième, ce niveau d'analyse nous a déjà révélé que les minorités, la diversité et le transnationalisme religieux peuvent devenir des sources de conflits et poser des défis sur le plan de la sécurité internationale. Or, ces éléments constituent également des ressources inexploitées pour la diplomatie et la coopération internationale. Nous avons examiné, dans la section sur l'analyse au niveau mondial, comment la mondialisation a permis de relier le mondial au local en favorisant l'émergence de nouvelles identités, en renforçant les anciennes et en mettant les gens en lien avec divers types de diasporas religieuses et ethniques. Tablant sur l'évolution du contexte mondial, social et religieux de la scène politique mondiale, une diplomatie à multiples volets qui tient compte de la religion s'emploie à promouvoir le dialogue, le règlement des conflits et la consolidation de la paix.

L'analyse au niveau Etat-société

Au niveau de l'Etat et de la société, les revendications identitaires (structurées autour d'une diversité croissante des identités religieuses) font planer de nouvelles menaces pour la sécurité et exercent de plus en plus d'influence sur la politique intérieure et étrangère. Premièrement, la mondialisation a complexifié les relations multiraciales, multiethniques et multiconfessionnelles en

La diplomatie à multiples volets renvoie aux contacts informels effectués, au niveau de la société civile ou des organisations non gouvernementales, entre des particuliers, des groupes religieux, des communautés d'affaires et un large éventail d'acteurs non étatiques issus de sociétés et d'Etats différents. Une diplomatie qui tient compte de la religion reconnaît que si la religion fait partie du problème des conflits internationaux, il faut aussi qu'elle fasse partie de la solution.

Occident qui entourent toute une gamme d'enjeux sociaux et politiques, car ces communautés *intérieures* font de plus en plus partie de diasporas religieuses *mondiales*. À cause de la mondialisation, les relations multiconfessionnelles ne peuvent plus être vues comme un problème propre à un seul pays dans les discours politiques internes sur les « relations raciales », les « droits des minorités » ou le « multiculturalisme ». Les groupes sociaux qu'on identifie parfois en termes de race, d'ethnicité et de religion ont souvent des identités qui se recoupent. Les groupes religieux minoritaires (comme la communauté sikhe du Canada, les Algériens ou Marocains musulmans en France, et les minorités chinoises principalement chrétiennes de la Malaisie ou de l'Indonésie) ont souvent des identités sociales élargies que favorise la mondialisation; on peut donc considérer que ces groupes font partie de diasporas religieuses transnationales.

La mondialisation a donc fait des relations multiconfessionnelles une nouvelle variante des « questions internationales » (où sont fusionnées les considérations de politique intérieure et internationale; Mannin, 1979, p. 308-324). L'incident *intérieur* des caricatures danoises sur Mahomet en 2005, par exemple, a été transmis et amplifié par toute une sous-culture islamique *mondiale*, et a suscité des affrontements violents très loin du Danemark, notamment entre musulmans et chrétiens dans des Etats du nord du Nigéria où la charia est en vigueur (IISS, 2006, p. 251). Sur le plan politique, les extrémistes islamiques locaux dans de nombreux pays ont tiré parti du retentissement mondial de l'affaire des

islamiques. Ces intellectuels, qui s'efforcent de propager ce qu'ils considèrent comme une forme plus pure et moins malienne de l'islam, sont en rupture avec la longue tradition de cohabitation des communautés religieuses. Malheureusement, l'intervention du département américain de la Défense avec son Initiative transsaharienne de lutte contre le terrorisme n'a fait qu'encourager les islamistes radicaux et exacerber les tensions religieuses (Gutelius, 2006, p. 38-39).

Souvent, la culture et la religion ne sont guère utiles pour anticiper la formation des alliances. On peut tout aussi bien penser à des exceptions (la plus récente étant le soutien de l'Occident – contre la Serbie orthodoxe – aux musulmans de Bosnie et du Kosovo) qu'à des exemples qui correspondent à une concordance d'intérêts alignés sur la religion (les États orthodoxes opposés au bombardement de la Serbie; l'Allemagne pressée par ses catholiques d'accorder la reconnaissance diplomatique de la sécession de la Croatie catholique d'avec la Yougoslavie). Historiquement, Venise a commerce avec les Ottomans pour finalement s'allier aux princes chrétiens et défaire les Ottomans à la bataille de Lépante (en 1517).

Néanmoins, il est probablement raisonnable de conclure que la démographie religieuse des États peut être l'élément déclencheur de conflits interétatiques et (ce qui est crucial) que les débats internes sur la culture, la religion et la politique d'un pays (les éléments qui déterminent son identité collective) l'amènent à donner à ses intérêts nationaux un cadre qui influe sur l'orientation de sa politique étrangère.

Troisièmement, l'expansion du pentecôtisme soulève un autre aspect relatif à l'influence possible de la religion sur la politique étrangère et les relations inter-étatiques. Certains des pays où vivent les plus importantes populations

Source : Jenkins (2002), p. 167.

1. Pays essentiellement musulmans	Pakistan	Bangladesh	Arabie saoudite	Turquie	Iran	Yémen
2. Pays à prédominance musulmane et minorité chrétienne importante	Indonésie	Égypte	Soudan			
3. Pays essentiellement chrétiens	États-Unis	Brésil	Mexique	Russie		
4. Pays à prédominance chrétienne et minorité musulmane importante	Philippines	Congo (ex-Zaïre)	Allemagne	Ouganda		
5. Pays chrétiens et musulmans, sans prédominance marquée	Nigéria	Éthiopie	Tanzanie			
6. Autres pays, sans prédominance chrétienne ou musulmane	Inde	Chine	Vietnam	Thaïlande	Japon	

TABLEAU 2
L'équilibre du pouvoir religieux dans les pays les plus peuplés au 21^e siècle

Jenkins confond les versions plus revivantes de ces traditions religieuses avec l'existence de la diversité religieuse. Il semble tenir pour acquis que les Croisés, une phase peu glorieuse des relations entre chrétiens et musulmans qui s'est déroulée au Moyen-Orient, offrent la seule clé pour l'interprétation des identités collectives des États ou sociétés fondées sur le christianisme et l'islam. Au Mali, par exemple, de jeunes intellectuels musulmans réformistes, souvent formés au Pakistan ou en Arabie saoudite, deviennent les chefs de file des nouvelles organisations communautaires

mondiales qui s'exercent sur leurs communautés locales, dépend d'un ensemble de facteurs – assurément de leur théologie politique et de leur interprétation générale de la pitié et de l'éthique religieuses, mais également de l'apport éventuel de la mondialisation à l'évolution de l'influence sociale, culturelle, politique et économique que peuvent exercer ces communautés au sein de l'État et de la société auxquels elles appartiennent.

Cependant, avant de retener l'hypothèse de Jenkins sur la religion et la formation d'alliances, nous devons approfondir bien davantage nos connaissances sur l'influence exercée par la culture et la religion sur la construction des identités collectives des États et des communautés à l'ère de la mondialisation. Il est généralement admis en sciences sociales que toute notion du « soi » ne peut se construire qu'en relation avec un « autre ». Huntington propose une version musclée de cette hypothèse générale : « On ne sait qui l'on est que lorsqu'on sait qui l'on n'est pas et, souvent, contre qui l'on est » (Huntington, 1996, p. 21; c'est nous qui soulignons). D'autres auteurs accepteraient la position générale soi-autre relative à la construction de l'identité, mais soutiennent (dans une veine plus neutre) que cette diversité équivaut à ce que les sociétés et les communautés en font : des ennemis, des rivaux ou des amis (Wendt, 1999). Or, ce que les communautés religieuses et leurs dirigeants font de l'identité, compte tenu des pressions

Des diasporas au sein desquelles l'apartenance ethnique et religieuse peut favoriser de nouvelles formes d'identité existent également dans d'autres régions. La diaspora tamoule (hindoue) finance et soutient la guerre civile contre le gouvernement du Sri Lanka, à majorité cinghalaise (bouddhiste-nationarite cinghalaise) (bouddhiste-nationarite). La diaspora de la classe moyenne indienne de Silicon Valley en Californie a financé les partis nationalistes hindous (le RSS et le BJP) en Inde. Autrement dit, les diasporas religieuses – notamment celles qui forment les principales minorités religieuses dans les pays occidentaux – peuvent jouer un rôle important en politique internationale sur le plan des conflits ethniques et du fondamentalisme religieux.

L'analyse au niveau interreligieux

Ce niveau d'analyse s'attache principalement aux conséquences des tendances religieuses mondiales pour la conduite des relations internationales. Il s'agit ici de savoir quelle influence l'identité religieuse peut exercer sur les relations entre les États en termes d'alliances et d'alliés possibles, quelle est la capacité des pays à influencer les autres et quel impact la religion peut avoir sur la probabilité des conflits et leur intensité éventuelle. Considérons d'abord les 25 pays susceptibles d'être les plus peuplés d'ici le milieu du XXI^e siècle (tableau 1).

TABLEAU 1 Pays les plus peuplés au monde : projections jusqu'en 2025 et 2050 (population en millions)				
Pays	1975	2000	2025	2050
1. Inde	622	1 014	1 277	1 620
2. Chine	918	1 262	1 464	1 471
3. États-Unis	216	276	338	404
4. Indonésie	138	225	301	338
5. Nigéria	59	123	205	304
6. Pakistan	75	142	213	268
7. Brésil	109	173	201	206
8. Bangladesh	76	129	178	205
9. Éthiopie	33	64	115	188
10. Congo	25	52	105	182
11. Philippines	44	81	122	154
12. Mexique	61	100	134	153
13. Vietnam	48	79	106	119
14. Russie	134	146	136	118
15. Égypte	37	68	95	113
16. Japon	112	127	120	101
17. Iran	33	66	88	100
18. Arabie saoudite	7	22	48	91
19. Tanzanie	16	35	60	88
20. Turquie	41	66	82	87
21. Soudan	16	35	61	84
22. Ouganda	11	23	48	84
23. Allemagne	79	83	85	80
24. Yémen	7	17	40	71
25. Thaïlande	42	60	71	70

Source : Jenkins (2002), p. 84.

la population mondiale sont des pays déjà partagés entre les deux grandes religions du monde : le christianisme et l'islam. Jenkins soutient donc que les divisions entre les États et les divisions religieuses pourraient de plus en plus se renforcer mutuellement.

Est-ce un constat important? Dans l'affirmative, dans quelles conditions prend-il de l'importance? Jenkins affirme que

ces divisions vont probablement s'accroître à l'avenir : « Dans les conflits qui sévissent actuellement en Afrique et en Asie se dessine peut-être le paysage politique du prochain siècle et probablement la source des grandes puissances et alliances futures » (Jenkins, 2002, p. 164).

longue date. Ces liens ou réseaux entre le local et le mondial ne se forment pas spontanément; ce ne sont pas des maillons libres. Ils constituent des réseaux sociaux enracinés dans des diasporas religieuses qui sont également un aspect essentiel du transnationalisme religieux. Ainsi, plutôt que de croire aveuglément que ce réseautage social est un trait particulier de la mondialisation et une nouvelle caractéristique essentielle de la politique internationale, il importe de se rappeler que de tels réseaux sociaux et d'information s'inscrivent dans la majeure partie de l'histoire humaine et sont antérieurs au système étatique moderne. Ce sont ces types de réseaux locaux-mondiaux d'intérêt religieux ou social qui permettent à Al-Qaïda et au Hezbollah du Liban de s'adonner au blanchiment d'argent et au financement illégitime en Afrique centrale, notamment en Occident, jusqu'à la modification récente du paysage politique, la capacité qu'avaient le Nigéria, la Côte d'Ivoire et le Libéria d'échapper aux sanctions des Nations Unies sur les diamants de la guerre était devenue préoccupante (IISS, 2002-2003, p. 323). Dans les États du nord du Nigéria par exemple, les organisations criminelles et les groupes islamistes radicaux ont réussi à rassembler leurs effectifs (IISS, 2006, p. 251). C'est grâce à des groupes extrémistes religieux locaux (des sous-

traîtres, en quelque sorte) comme Abu Sayraf aux Philippines et la Jamaah Islamiyah en Indonésie qu'Al-Qaïda est florissante. Des religieux radicaux formés en Égypte, en Arabie saoudite ou ailleurs trouvent refuge en Europe ou en Amérique du Nord, où ils peuvent désormais propager à l'Occident leur forme d'islam extrémiste et radical. Malheureusement, la mondialisation brouille la démarcation entre les organisations religieuses engagées dans le service social et celles qui sont impliquées dans le terrorisme. Lorsqu'une organisation islamique de service social recueille de l'argent pour la Palestine en Occident ou dans l'ensemble du monde islamique, il est toujours possible que le Hamas ou le Hezbollah se serve de ces fonds pour financer le terrorisme. Cependant, nous avons déjà connu cette situation, c'est du moins le cas des Français. Le mode de fonctionnement de ces réseaux sociaux n'est pas nouveau, car c'est ainsi que les frères soufistes d'Afrique du Nord ont soutenu les combattants de la résistance islamique contre l'occupation française à la fin du XIX^e siècle. Les réseaux sociaux et caritatifs susceptibles de recruter et de financer les auteurs d'attentats-suicides aident et entretiennent aussi des communautés. D'ailleurs, le développement de l'islam et du christianisme dans les milieux urbains d'Afrique s'explique entre autres par les services d'aide sociale qu'offrent ces organisations à vocation religieuse.

Compte tenu de la faiblesse de l'État, de la corruption et de l'état lamentable des infrastructures dans ces pays, les organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) vouées au développement, qu'elles soient religieuses ou séculières, sont une source importante d'éducation et d'assistance sociale et sanitaire dans les pays en développement. La mondialisation permet aussi aux membres de la diaspora, en allant même parfois jusqu'à leur en donner le pouvoir, de créer et de participer à un éventail de nouveaux types d'identités mondiales ou transnationales offrant de nouveaux genres d'action communautaire politique. Il n'y a là rien d'habituel. Une diversité de groupes de pression et de défense – Amnistie internationale, Human Rights Watch et la plupart des ONG vouées au développement – comment sur ce genre d'identification pour obtenir des appuis financiers. Mais la mondialisation peut aussi permettre aux membres de la diaspora de créer et de participer à de nouvelles formes d'identité et d'action politique et radicales. Ce qu'Olivier Roy appelle « la mondialisation de l'islam », déjà évoquée ici, en est un des principaux exemples actuels. Il se peut qu'au sein de la diaspora musulmane en Occident, la renaissance de l'islam soit moins un resac contre la modernisation ou l'occidentalisation que sa conséquence. En effet, les jeunes musulmans déracinés qui vivent en situation minoritaire dans les sociétés occidentales peuvent devenir des éléments de la « grande Oumma » – une majorité islamique mondiale, la communauté mondiale musulmane – grâce aux vidéos, à Internet et aux billets d'avion à bas prix (vers des destinations comme le Pakistan). Cet état de choses peut être la source de nouvelles formes de radicalisme, allant du soutien à Al-Qaïda au refus de l'intégration sociale aux sociétés occidentales (Roy, 2002).

De plus, la mondialisation crée un monde plus fragmenté et hétérogène, favorisant l'établissement d'identités plus définies. D'une part, la mondialisation, par-delà le temps, l'espace et la distance, permet aux personnes de même identité de prendre conscience les uns des autres et de se rassembler à l'échelle planétaire. D'autre part, elle contribue aux divisions d'ordre ethnique, religieuses ou racial qui fragmentent le paysage politique en unités de plus en plus petites.

Cependant, ce dont nous sommes témoins n'est pas si simple que cela. Les échelons internationaux et local sont de plus en plus étroitement liés, dans une sorte de « particularisme mondial ». On en voit un bon exemple dans la « mondialisation de l'islam », où certains types d'islam radical dans le monde brouillent les liens entre l'islam, une société donnée et un territoire particulier. Les rapports transnationaux entre les diverses Églises et dénominations qui forment le courant évangélique et pentecôtiste du christianisme mondial en sont un autre exemple. La résurgence mondiale de la religion ne s'explique pas – ou du moins pas uniquement – par des peurs et des divisions immémorales, mais aussi par de nouvelles, nées de l'interdépendance paradoxale de ces forces sociales qui, dans un même temps, unifient et fragmentent le monde (Beyer, 1994; Barber, 1995; Clark, 1997). Il ne faudrait donc voir dans les causes ou les risques de

conflits non pas le produit de l'existence de la diversité religieuse, mais plutôt le résultat d'un *écroulement* ou d'un effritement de la diversité induit par les forces de la mondialisation.

Comment le niveau d'analyse mondial nous permet-il de comprendre l'impact de la résurgence religieuse sur la sécurité et les conflits? En premier lieu, la mondialisation transforme rapidement l'essence même de la religion et, partant, la nature des acteurs religieux, ératiques ou non, dans les relations internationales. Autrement dit, le mode de transformation de la religion par la mondialisation (et inversement) est un aspect essentiel de la façon dont les changements sociaux influent sur les relations internationales.

Depuis que Samuel Huntington a popularisé la notion de « choc des civilisations », la plupart des constats relatifs à la religion dans les relations internationales découlent d'une analyse de blocs stratégiques et assez bien délimités qui constituent ostensiblement les principales civilisations et religions du monde : le judaïsme, le christianisme, l'islam, le bouddhisme, l'hindouisme. Toutefois, cette analyse suppose la stabilité du paysage religieux à l'échelle mondiale, de même qu'une approche plutôt statique des acteurs religieux non étatiques, en contradiction avec la réalité et l'évolution de la religion au XXI^e siècle.

En deuxième lieu, le rôle de la religion dans les relations internationales évolue constamment. Partout dans le monde islamique surviennent des changements

religieux et sociaux rapides qui produisent l'éventail des acteurs islamiques non étatiques dont il est quotidiennement question dans les journaux (Al-Qaïda, le Hamas, le Jihad islamique, etc.). Mais bien d'autres acteurs islamiques non étatiques ne sont pas des groupes terroristes ; c'est notamment le cas des Frères musulmans, un mouvement politique particulièrement actif en Égypte, en Algérie, en Jordanie, au Koweït, en Syrie et au Soudan. Quant à l'organisation missionnaire Tablighi Jamaat (une société pour la propagation de la foi musulmane), elle est probablement le plus important acteur islamique non étatique et le principal élément responsable de la résurgence de l'islam à l'échelle mondiale (Kepel, 1994). Autrement dit, les groupes terroristes islamiques qui font souvent la manchette ne sont pas les seuls acteurs islamiques non étatiques (ni même nécessairement les plus importants) de l'univers politique. Troisièrement, la mondialisation contribue à la création ou à l'expansion de diasporas religieuses ou ethniques partout dans le monde. Ces diasporas figurent parmi les principaux acteurs non étatiques sur la scène politique du XXI^e siècle. Les diasporas religieuses contribuent à une évolution de la nature des conflits et de la coopération et compliquent parfois le problème de la sécurité et du terrorisme mondial. C'est pourquoï, dans les milieux du renseignement et de la sécurité, le concept de la « lutte au terrorisme » à l'échelle mondiale cède le pas à la notion plus large de lutte contre une « insurrection islamique mondiale » (Kilcullen, 2006).

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Introduction

L' e présent article décrit l'évolution du rôle des identités religieuses et de leur incidence sur les relations internationales. Il explique comment la mondialisation accentue l'effet d'intégration et de fragmentation des identités religieuses et transforme le rôle que jouent ces identités sur la scène mondiale, notamment par l'évolution des principaux acteurs religieux (États, acteurs non étatiques et diasporas). L'article met aussi en lumière l'apport de ces identités aux conflits et à la coopération à l'échelle internationale. Il aborde les conséquences possibles de cette évolution des tendances démographiques mondiales et de l'identité religieuse (principalement dans l'islam et le christianisme) dans la perspective des conflits, de la sécurité et du développement.

Les « niveaux d'analyse »
et l'avenir de la politique
internationale en matière
d'identité religieuse

Les « niveaux d'analyse »
L'approche par « niveaux d'analyse », d'usages courant dans la théorie des relations internationales, fait particulièrement bien ressortir certaines incidences possibles des tendances en matière de démographie et d'identité religieuse (décrites dans « Tendances mondiales de l'identité religieuse » dans le présent

numéro à la page 14) dans la perspective des conflits, de la sécurité et du développement :

- Premièrement, le niveau supérieur, d'envergure **mondiale**, s'attache aux effets de l'économie, de la technologie et de la mondialisation sur la résurgence de la religion.
- Deuxièmement, le niveau **inter-étatique** (le niveau d'analyse relatif aux États dans le système international, au sens où s'entend conventionnellement la notion de relations internationales), consiste à examiner ce que ces tendances démographiques signifient pour la diplomatie, la gestion des affaires de l'État et, au sens large, les relations entre les États.
- Enfin, les diverses influences que ces tendances démographiques peuvent exercer sur les religions, la politique et la stabilité politique à l'échelon national relèvent du niveau **État-société**.

L'analyse au niveau **mondial**
L'analyse au niveau mondial tente d'expliquer les résultats des relations internationales en termes de forces naturelles, sociales ou technologiques mondiales qui transcendent les relations entre les États en ce qui a trait à l'analyse du système international. Ce niveau devient de plus en plus important en raison des effets d'intégration et de fragmentation de la mondialisation sur les relations internationales.

La mondialisation fait rapidement tomber les barrières sociales et économiques dans le temps et l'espace et donc les distances entre les États. Elle transforme les diverses populations mondiales en un monde plus intégré et plus homogène, comme en font foi les marchés mondiaux, les voyages internationaux, une culture des jeunes à l'échelle mondiale, l'ère de l'information mondiale (qu'on pense aux images de la brutalité policière

Le principe de laïcité en France

Gouvernement de la France (décembre 2003), *Commission de réflexion sur l'application du principe de laïcité dans la République* : Rapport au président de la République.

Ce rapport présente les conclusions de la Commission de réflexion sur l'application du principe de laïcité dans la République, présidée par Bernard Stasi. Le président Jacques Chirac a mis cette commission sur pied en juillet 2003 pour analyser comment le principe de laïcité devrait s'appliquer dans la pratique au sein d'un pays dont la diversité religieuse a augmenté en raison de l'immigration. Le rapport met l'accent sur le port de vêtements à caractère religieux dans le réseau d'éducation publique, mais on y indique aussi comment la laïcité devrait s'appliquer dans le domaine public, au travail et dans le cadre de la prestation de services publics. Pour comprendre comment la laïcité devrait s'appliquer en pratique, la commission a interrogé des représentants de divers groupes, notamment des dirigeants religieux et communautaires, des enseignants, des partisans de l'égalité des droits et des politiciens.

À la suite de cette recherche, la commission a retiré que la République française est une société séculière et que les signes religieux ostensibles ne doivent pas être portés dans le réseau d'éducation publique. Cette conclusion a mené à l'adoption de la loi française sur l'application du principe de laïcité et sur les signes d'appartenance religieuse dans les écoles, qui interdit le port de ces signes dans les établissements d'enseignement primaire et secondaire publics du pays. Bien que ce principe ait été l'élément du rapport le plus publicisé, la commission a fait d'autres recommandations. Elle a entre autres suggéré de déclarer Yom Kippur et Eid comme des jours fériés, d'interdire les signes ostentatoires dans les affiliations politiques et de trouver des façons d'éliminer les pratiques discriminatoires.

que la prise en compte de la diversité religieuse augmente l'efficacité des programmes et des politiques. Le degré auquel les praticiens en politique et en prestation de programmes tiennent systématiquement compte de la diversité religieuse dans l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre des politiques variait de manière significative. Ceux qui oeuvraient à l'élaboration des politiques ont souvent remarqué que ces considérations étaient en grande partie absentes de leurs fonctions. En revanche, ceux qui sont responsables de la mise en œuvre des politiques sur le plan opérationnel ont démontré une compréhension plus développée de la diversité

religieuse parmi leurs intervenants et de quand et comment cela devait se traduire en adaptations afin de mieux atteindre les objectifs des politiques par l'intermédiaire de programmes efficaces. Cependant, ceux-ci ont aussi exprimé des inquiétudes face à la perte de mémoire institutionnelle possible entourant les adaptations faites aux programmes suite à l'application d'une grille informelle portant sur la diversité religieuse. En se fondant sur ces entrevues initiales, il peut être utile d'explorer certaines questions plus en détail :

- 1) L'approche actuellement utilisée par les praticiens en politique et en prestation de programmes pour traiter de la diversité religieuse (c.-à-d., sur une base ad hoc informelle) sera-t-elle appropriée dans la foulée de l'augmentation de la diversité religieuse?
- 2) Doit-on élaborer une approche plus cohérente pour aborder la diversité religieuse (c.-à-d., en tant qu'élément distinct de la culture) dans l'élaboration des politiques, de même que dans leur mise en œuvre?
- 3) À cet égard, quelles sont les pratiques exemplaires au sein et à l'extérieur du gouvernement fédéral?

d'un cours de gestion de l'EFPC, *Diversité, vision et action*. On donne aux participants du cours deux études de cas auxquelles un gestionnaire peut être confronté. L'un d'eux fournit l'exemple d'un membre d'équipe dont la religiosité est invasive et le second fournit l'exemple d'un membre d'équipe dont la religiosité n'est pas invasive. On demande ensuite aux gestionnaires d'élaborer des approches appropriées pour chaque cas. Bien que la formation d'initiation à la religion soit fournie au sein de certains ministères et par l'EFPC, certaines des personnes interrogées ont exprimé des doutes concernant la pertinence de la formation d'initiation à la religion qui leur était disponible. Elles ont remarqué qu'il y avait très peu d'occasions de donner une rétroaction aux ministères sur la pertinence de la formation qu'elles recevaient. De plus, les approches adoptées par les gestionnaires pour répondre aux besoins religieux de leurs subalternes variaient grandement selon leurs connaissances personnelles de la religion et selon leur niveau de confort devant d'éventuels conflits religieux au sein de leurs équipes.

Conclusion

Au cours des entrevues, les praticiens en politique et en prestation de programmes ont tous reconnu la présence de la diversité religieuse au sein de la société canadienne et que cette diversité continuera de croître. Cependant, il existe une variation parmi eux quant à l'importance devant être rattachée à l'application d'une grille d'analyse portant sur la diversité religieuse dans l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre des politiques. Bien que, de façon générale, les participants se méfiaient de l'adoption formelle d'une grille distincte à cet égard, il était clair que certains ministères et agences appliquent déjà une telle grille de manière implicite au cas-par-cas lorsqu'ils jugent

des Premières nations. Cette formation permet aux nouveaux employés d'en apprendre au sujet de la culture, des traditions et des croyances des Premières nations ou des Inuits.

- *Fournir aux employés une compréhension appropriée du respect accordé aux leaders religieux et aux anciens d'une communauté.* Cela comprend l'apprentissage au sujet de l'influence que les anciens et les leaders religieux exercent dans le processus décisionnel de leurs communautés.
- *Fournir des outils efficaces de leur permettre de travailler dans différents milieux religieux et de foi.* Cela comprend la sensibilisation des employés envers les différentes fêtes religieuses et des stratégies de communication efficaces pour mener des forums de discussion et de participer activement au sein des communautés.

En plus d'une formation générale qu'offre chaque ministère à ses employés sur la diversité religieuse, l'École de la fonction publique du Canada (EFPC) offre de la formation aux gestionnaires afin de les aider à traiter avec les différences religieuses en milieu de travail en leur donnant des directives générales et en explorant des adaptations précises par l'intermédiaire d'études de cas. Par exemple, les questions sur la diversité religieuse sont abordées dans le cadre

autour de besoins précis des clientèles religieuses n'étaient pas disponibles. De plus, les connaissances acquises sur les besoins précis de ces clientèles pour aider dans la conception ou la mise en œuvre de nouveaux programmes.

Formation

La formation d'initiation à la religion pour les employés est souvent fournie directement par leur ministère ou agence; l'AINC, le MAECI, l'ACDI et le ministère de la Défense nationale fournissent tous une formation de sensibilisation à la religion afin de permettre à leurs employés de remplir leurs fonctions autant au Canada qu'à l'étranger. En plus de la formation d'initiation normale fournie aux employés, les individus peuvent aussi demander une formation supplémentaire sur la religion s'ils le désirent.

De façon générale, la formation d'initiation à la religion des employés fédéraux comporte trois éléments :

- *Sensibiliser les employés aux croyances et aux pratiques religieuses des communautés et des gens.* Cela comprend enseigner les croyances religieuses, la signification des symboles religieux et les coutumes religieuses de diverses communautés aux employés. Par exemple, l'AINC offre une session de formation de sensibilisation de deux jours aux nouveaux employés qui a lieu au sein d'une communauté

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hension du rôle central que la religion et la foi peuvent jouer pour certains individus et certaines communautés; pour que les programmes soient efficaces, ils estimaient qu'il y a lieu de reconnaître et de respecter les croyances des individus et des communautés avec lesquels le personnel du programme interagit.

Par exemple, les ministères et les agences ont mis au point des outils pour leurs employés, tels des calendriers soulignant les fêtes religieuses de plusieurs religions différentes et l'embauche d'experts-résidents en religion afin de fournir des conseils aux employés. Ces outils aident les ministères et les agences à modifier les fournisseurs de services, les dates, les heures et même le titre sous lequel un service est fourni afin d'assurer l'accès. Cependant, les participants ont souligné des limites aux adaptations de programmes, notamment l'importance que de telles adaptations n'aillent pas à l'en-

contre des grands principes des droits de la personne qui sont largement partagés dans l'en-

semble de la société canadienne.

Comme le laisse prévoir les constats précités quant aux connaissances de ceux qui sont responsables de la mise en œuvre de programmes et de leurs collègues œuvrant à l'élaboration des politiques, ces premiers semblaient posséder une meilleure capacité d'identifier où et pourquoi des adaptations à la diversité religieuse étaient nécessaires. De plus, ils ont souligné des problèmes de continuité et de formation. Les leçons apprises et les pratiques exemplaires pour l'élaboration des programmes s'articulant

Alors que l'aumônerie possède une structure institutionnelle solide pour répondre aux besoins religieux des détenus, on n'a pas trouvé de structure institutionnelle et de cohérence semblable répondant à la diversité religieuse dans d'autres ministères ou agences. Sur le plan organisationnel, on accorde peu ou pas d'importance aux questions de diversité religieuse dans la structure organisationnelle de la plupart des ministères et agences. Les questions religieuses sur le plan organisationnel sont surtout soulevées dans le cadre de la gestion du personnel et pour s'assurer que les politiques sur la non-discrimination soient respectées dans les processus de dotation de personnel.

Variations d'adaptation sur le plan opérationnel

Sur le plan opérationnel, on tend à prendre la diversité religieuse en considération afin de s'assurer du succès du programme. Dans ce cas, les participants ont expliqué que si on ne tenait pas compte de la diversité religieuse dans l'élaboration et dans la prestation d'un programme, les buts du programme pourraient ne pas être atteints.

Afin de s'assurer du succès et de l'efficacité des programmes, les Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada (AINC), le MAECI et l'Agence canadienne de développement international (ACDI) ont tous accordé une importance significative aux points de vue religieux de leurs intervenants et homologues respectifs. Les participants de ces ministères semblaient avoir une meilleure compré-

hension du rôle central que la religion et la foi peuvent jouer pour certains individus et certaines communautés; pour que les programmes soient efficaces, ils estimaient qu'il y a lieu de reconnaître et de respecter les croyances des individus et des communautés avec lesquels le personnel du programme interagit.

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cas-par-cas lorsque les ministères et les agences estiment que la diversité des identités religieuses peut être un facteur déterminant dans l'atteinte des buts du ministère et pour garantir le succès d'un programme.

Dans l'ensemble, on est-
mait que les lois du
Canada et ses institu-
tions législatives, judi-
ciaires et démocratiques
offrent déjà les directives
nécessaires aux minis-
tères fédéraux, aux ges-
tionnaires et aux
employés afin qu'ils puis-
sent fournir des services
appropriés aux Cana-
diens, y compris ceux
ayant des identités reli-
gieuses diverses. Ces
directives générales per-
mettent aux ministères

de tenir compte de la diversité religieuse
dans les processus d'élaboration des poli-
tiques où il est convenu que cela est
important afin de remplir les mandats
ministériels et d'atteindre les objectifs
en matière de politiques et d'adapter les
programmes aux besoins religieux et
autres besoins de la clientèle.

Cependant, cette approche s'est traduite
par de grandes différences entre les
ministères et les agences dans la mesure
où la diversité religieuse est prise en
considération et comment on lui donne
suite. Notamment, il y a une différen-
ce claire entre les personnes interrogées
œuvrant à l'élaboration des politiques
et ceux responsables de la mise en œuvre
des politiques. Les premiers reconnaî-
saient de façon générale leur manque
de compréhension face aux différences
religieuses. En revanche, plusieurs parmi
ceux responsables de la mise en œuvre
des politiques semblaient mieux rensei-
gnés et se croyaient relativement bien
équipés pour identifier comment des

Malgré leur sensibi-

lisation à la diversité

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croyances et des pratiques religieuses
particulières peuvent avoir un effet sur le
succès du programme et la prestation
de services et comment aborder celles-ci
par l'intermédiaire d'adaptations judi-
cieuses.

Dans les deux cas, les
personnes interrogées
approuvaient de façon
générale ce qu'elles
jugeaient être la flexibi-
lité de l'approche actuelle
du Canada en ce qui a
trait à la façon d'aborder
la diversité religieuse
par une combinaison
d'adaptations des poli-
tiques au cas-par-cas et
de la résolution de cer-
taines questions par les
tribunaux. Bien que la
plupart des personnes
interrogées ne se soient
pas arrêtées sur le rôle des tribunaux au
cours des entrevues, certains estimaient
que de laisser les tribunaux pendre des
décisions sur la diversité religieuse était
à conseiller.

Aborder la diversité religieuse sous la rubrique de la « culture »?

Toutes les personnes interrogées ont
reconnu que le Canada est un pays
diversifié sur le plan religieux. Elles s'en-
tendaient largement pour dire que cette
diversité avait augmenté au fil du temps,
en grande partie à cause de l'immigra-
tion, et que le Canada continuera d'ob-
server des changements dans la
composition religieuse de ses citoyens
dans les années à venir.

Malgré leur sensibilisation à la diversité
religieuse grandissante au Canada, les
praticiens en politique semblaient peu
connaître les différentes religions et

Un éventail d'approches à la diversité religieuse au niveau de la conception et de la mise en œuvre des politiques

Tel que mentionné ci-haut, tous les par-
ticipants ont reconnu que la diversité
religieuse faisait partie du paysage cana-
dien, bien que leur capacité d'en détec-
ter la mise en œuvre des politiques variait
grandement.

Peu d'exemples d'élaboration et de mise en œuvre intégrée des politiques

Les entrevues ont révélé peu d'exemples
d'approches institutionnelles structurées
permettant aux ministères et aux agences
d'aborder la diversité religieuse « sur le

comme de la diversité entre les religions, mais aussi la diversité extensive au sein des communautés religieuses, ce qui compliquerait grandement leur tâche. Bien que la majorité des participants se méfiaient de l'adoption et de l'application d'un discours de haut niveau sur la diversité religieuse, les entrevues ont tout de même révélé qu'en pratique une telle grille était appliquée de manière implicite à l'élaboration et à la prestation de programmes dans un certain nombre de cas. Cette grille était appliquée au

d'économie). Les participants croyaient qu'ajouter une autre grille en matière de diversité religieuse serait inapproprié, et ce, pour deux raisons :

- La diversité religieuse fait déjà l'objet d'une attention adéquate en tant qu'élément de grilles « culturelles » au sens large (p. ex. grilles ethnolinguistiques).
- Une grille de diversité religieuse serait plus coûteuse en temps et plus complexe à appliquer que les autres parce qu'on devrait non seulement tenir

Adoption d'une « grille d'analyse » distincte en matière de diversité religieuse

Les participants ont convenu qu'il n'était pas nécessaire pour le Canada d'adopter une grille d'analyse distincte en matière de diversité religieuse pour la conception, la mise en œuvre et l'évaluation des politiques. Ils ont fait valoir que les praticiens en politique doivent déjà tenir compte de plusieurs grilles distinctes (p. ex. les différences en matière d'ethnicité, de langue, de sexe, régionales et

En préparation pour ces entrevues, les intervieweurs ont effectué des recherches préliminaires dans les ministères et les agences afin de comprendre leurs mandats et les buts de leurs politiques.

Les participants devaient répondre à une série de questions afin de déterminer jusqu'à quel point la diversité religieuse était prise en considération dans l'élaboration des politiques et la mise en œuvre des programmes. Au cours du processus d'entrevue, aucune personne interrogée n'a pu répondre à toutes les questions. On a toutefois encouragé les participants à développer les éléments des questions auxquels ils se sentaient capables de répondre. De plus, on a demandé aux participants de réfléchir au-delà de leurs poste et responsabilités actuels et de puiser dans leur expérience des postes qu'ils avaient occupés précédemment au sein du gouvernement fédéral.

On leur a posé les questions suivantes :

- 1) La conception et la mise en œuvre de politiques touchent souvent l'identification et la prise en considération des différents besoins des Canadiens.
- a) Est-ce que la diversité religieuse des Canadiens est prise en considération dans la conception et dans la prestation des services et programmes publics offerts par votre ministère/agence? Si c'est le cas, comment?

- 2) Au cours des dernières années, de nombreux conflits entre les croyances et les pratiques religieuses et les politiques législatives/réglementaires et les services publics offerts par les gouvernements ont été réglés par l'intermédiaire des tribunaux au cas-par-cas.
- a) Quels mécanismes alternatifs de résolution (ou de prévention) de tels conflits ont été mis en œuvre (ou sont étudiés) par votre ministère/agence?
- b) Quels sont les plus grands défis auxquels votre ministère doit faire face afin de s'assurer de la résolution de tels conflits?
- c) Devrait-il y avoir un cadre de travail national sur la diversité religieuse?
- Est-ce que ces modifications découlaient d'une initiative ministérielle interne ou étaient-elles en réponse à des demandes externes de citoyens?
- c) Quels sont les services publics offerts par votre ministère qui font face aux plus grands défis en ce qui a trait à répondre aux besoins des Canadiens ayant des croyances et des pratiques religieuses diverses?
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- c) Devrait-il y avoir un cadre de travail national sur la diversité religieuse?

Les entrevues ont été effectuées sur une période de cinq mois entre avril et septembre 2008. Le PRP, de concert avec le MAECI, a interrogé 22 fonctionnaires différents provenant de 12 ministères et agences de la région de la Capitale nationale.

- Sur le plan opérationnel notamment, on observe une grande variation dans la mesure où les ministères fédéraux tiennent compte de la diversité religieuse dans leurs politiques et programmes.
- Dans la conception, la mise en œuvre et l'évaluation des politiques, on tend à tenir compte de la diversité religieuse sous la rubrique plus générale de la « culture ».
- Les pratiques en politique et en prestation de programmes sont parvenues à un large consensus selon lequel il n'est pas nécessaire au Canada d'adopter une « grille d'analyse » distincte pour aborder la diversité religieuse au Canada lors de l'élaboration des politiques.
- Les pratiques en politique et en prestation de programmes sont parvenues à un large consensus selon lequel il n'est pas nécessaire au Canada d'adopter une « grille d'analyse » distincte pour aborder la diversité religieuse au Canada lors de l'élaboration des politiques.

cinq mois (voir l'encadré à la page 45). L'objectif était de recueillir des renseignements de la part de fonctionnaires fédéraux expérimentés afin de savoir jusqu'à quel point et comment la religion et la diversité religieuse sont abordées dans l'élaboration des politiques fédérales. Les personnes interrogées provenaient de ministères et d'agences responsables d'un éventail de secteurs de politique, y compris la politique sociale, les affaires étrangères et la politique en matière de sécurité. Certains d'entre eux œuvraient à l'élaboration des politiques, d'autres à la prestation des services et à l'évaluation. On a demandé aux participants de puiser dans leur expérience personnelle de travail au sein du gouvernement fédéral en tant que gestionnaires, chercheurs et praticiens en politique ou en prestation de programmes afin de répondre à une série de questions. Les entrevues n'étaient pas conçues pour être exhaustives ou comme un sondage à grande échelle. Toutefois, trois thèmes communs en sont ressortis.

nal (MAECI), a interrogé des fonctionnaires fédéraux d'un certain nombre de ministères et d'agences de la Région de la capitale nationale sur une période de

À l'image de la diversité religieuse dans la politique générale canadienne : Points de vue des praticiens en matière de politique fédérale

Suite aux tables rondes, le PRP, de concert avec le ministère des Affaires étrangères et du Commerce internatio-

mal à l'aise face à ces problèmes. Les décideurs et le public sont souvent commodément des pratiques religieuses, de la diversité s'articulait autour de l'acquiescement des débats sur la gestion que la majorité des participants ont remarqué que bien l'élaboration des politiques gouvernementales. Les participants ont remarqué que bien la conception, la mise en œuvre et l'évaluation de la diversité religieuse dans la discussion des politiques (PRP) a mené des tables rondes sur l'approche canadienne sur la diversité multiculturelle à l'échelle du pays. Un des sujets retenus pour une recherche plus approfondie dans le contexte canadien a été la répercussion de la diversité religieuse sur la gestion de la diversité s'articulait autour de l'acquiescement des pratiques religieuses, des décideurs et le public sont souvent mal à l'aise face à ces problèmes.

Introduction

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Références

Les politiques et les pratiques des Forces canadiennes qui régissent les accommodements religieux témoignent d'une volonté institutionnelle de se préparer à une nouvelle ère de diversité. Cependant, les membres des Forces canadiennes de confession religieuse autre que chrétienne doivent souvent adapter leurs pratiques religieuses pour s'intégrer à la culture et aux tâches militaires, car la libre pratique de leur religion ne peut toujours être garantie. Le besoin d'accommodements et de politiques de protection des droits du personnel de religions minoritaires grandira à mesure que la diversité augmentera au sein des forces armées, phénomène dû aux efforts déployés pour attirer et retenir plus de membres issus de populations immigrantes. À mesure que ceux qui ne font pas partie de la norme historique chrétienne contestent les traditions militaires, des tensions émergeront. L'expérience des minorités religieuses des Forces canadiennes nous laisse entrevoir les défis potentiels qui attendent les autres institutions canadiennes et la société dans son ensemble, alors que la diversité religieuse s'intensifie au Canada. Cette expérience témoigne également d'un besoin continu de recherche en politiques sur le rôle et l'influence de la religion dans la société canadienne.

spécialement conçu, qui respecte les exigences islamiques de modestie. En outre, le personnel militaire peut maintenant obtenir des repas conformes à certaines restrictions alimentaires religieuses et prendre du temps pour la prière. Lentement mais sûrement, on leur offre des lieux de culte (ASPF, 2005, p. A3).

On a créé plusieurs lieux de culte interconfessionnels sur les bases canadiennes, soit en modifiant des chapelles chrétiennes, soit en créant des espaces distincts. En 2006, la chapelle chrétienne de la base canadienne d'Halifax a été élargie pour accueillir un lieu de culte multiconfessionnel appelé « le lieu de rassemblement », orné d'images religieuses et doté d'un lieu de prière et de ressources pour les pratiquants d'un éventail de religions. Des dirigeants spirituels chrétiens, bouddhistes, hindous, musulmans, sikhs, unitariens, autochtones et bahá'is ont participé au service de bénédiction (Gilmour, 2006). Au Collège militaire royal de Kingston, les aumôniers ont répondu à la représentation croissante de membres musulmans en installant un rideau dans la chapelle chrétienne, créant ainsi une salle de prière pour eux. De plus, l'aumônier de la base a fait installer des bains de pieds dans les salles de bains, pour faciliter les ablutions (Benham Rennie, 2006). En 2007, la base des Forces canadiennes de Shilo, au Manitoba, a érigé un « centre interconfessionnel » à côté de sa chapelle chrétienne, afin de répondre aux besoins spirituels des membres qui ne sont pas chrétiens (Rowers, 2007). Un « Cercle de l'unité » autochtone figure au sein du centre interconfessionnel et offre des « cérémonies d'étruves et des ateliers à l'intention des membres des FC et de leur famille » (Thiessen, 2006).

Si les Forces canadiennes sont tenues en vertu de la loi de réaliser les accommodements religieux du personnel et si les commandants sont obligés de faire respecter ces lois, le personnel issu de

minorités religieuses continue de vivre certaines difficultés dans l'environnement conformationnel de l'armée, parce qu'il est considéré comme ayant des « besoins particuliers » et qu'il est souvent visible-ment différent de la majorité blanche. Par exemple, malgré les politiques actuelles, les sikhs végétariens font remarquer que les repas végétariens ne sont pas toujours disponibles. Les adeptes patiens qui souhaitent célébrer le solstice lorsqu'ils sont en déploiement ne peuvent le faire nus, officiellement pour des raisons de sécurité (La Presse canadienne, 2007). Dans certains cas, les personnes qui demandent des accommodements religieux font l'objet d'une étude pour déterminer si leurs besoins sont réels, comme ce fut le cas pour un musulman converti qui demandait du temps pour prier et qui a été interrogé par son superviseur pour déterminer s'il en avait « vraiment » besoin (Benham Rennie, 2006).

Les traditions de longue date qui façon- nent la culture militaire présentent de réels défis pour le personnel minoritaire. Par exemple, traditionnellement et cul- turellement, les sikhs ont depuis tou- jours joué un rôle important dans l'armée, ce qui les rend plus susceptibles de choisir une carrière dans les Forces canadiennes. Cependant, beaucoup de sikhs ne boivent pas d'alcool, ce qui est une composante fondamentale de la fra- ternité et de la camaraderie dans tous les régiments canadiens. Dans un environ- nement civil, la décision d'un sikh de ne pas boire d'alcool aurait sans doute peu d'effets sur le sentiment de fraternité avec ses pairs, mais dans les forces armées (comme dans les armées de la plupart des pays occidentaux), l'alcool est une composante importante de la tradition militaire. De la même façon, une Autochtone qui écrivait sur les diffé- rences entre la culture militaire et la culture autochtone remarquait que les différences culturelles créent des obstacles frustrants au cheminement

Conclusion

professionnel et peuvent être source de malentendus entre les membres d'une unité. Elle explique par exemple que « chez les Inuits, la femme ne doit pas regarder un homme plus âgé dans les yeux, c'est irrespectueux. Dans le milieu militaire, si tu ne regardes pas ton super- viseur dans les yeux, on croit que tu as quelque chose à cacher. » (Bergeron, 2006). Dans ces exemples, des restric- tions religieuses ajoutées à des différen- ces visibles de couleur de peau ou d'habi- tudes vestimentaires isolent rapidement les minorités, considérées comme des étrangers dans un environnement où la conformité et l'inclusion sont essentielles à la réussite. En outre, ces caractéris- tiques favorisent l'exclusion, la discrimi- nation et le harcèlement.

Certains analyses militaires font valoir que pour produire une force de combat efficace, il est essentiel d'établir une cul- ture militaire distincte, afin de créer une cohésion au sein d'un groupe homo- gène (English, 2004; Snider, 1999; Ulmer *et al.*, 2000). Donna Winslow, conseillère auprès de la Commission d'enquête sur le déploiement des Forces canadiennes en Somalie, a avancé que la cohésion de groupe peut en réalité ren- forcer les comportements contraires aux politiques militaires officielles, parce que le personnel apprend à « couvrir » ses pairs pour protéger le groupe (Winslow, 1998, p. 345–367). Par conséquent, un formant de la culture militaire au Canada est qu'elle peut mener à des abus et à l'exclusion des éléments que les Forces canadiennes cherchent justement à intégrer, y compris les femmes, les per- sonnes autochtones et les minorités visi- bles. Les responsables des politiques doivent reconnaître que l'identité reli- gieuse risque d'entraver la cohésion de groupe et de devenir une source de dis- crimination et prendre des mesures pour surmonter cette réalité.

Les réserves représentent actuellement environ 25 000 membres et près de 36 p. 100 des Forces canadiennes (tous rangs et services confondus); selon le ministre de la Défense nationale (MDN, 2007a), « auparavant, près de 40 p. 100 de tous les casques bleus étaient réservistes ». Il est fort probable que la participation des unités de réserve, particulièrement celles des grands centres urbains, aux opérations militaires canadiennes fasse augmenter la diversité religieuse d'une unité au cours d'un déploiement.

Par conséquent, sur la base ou en dépit d'ailleurs, les aumôniers chrétiens sont d'avantage amenés à côtoyer des soldats élevés dans une croyance religieuse autre que chrétienne. Les Forces canadiennes ont essayé de plusieurs façons de s'adapter à cette réalité. Par exemple, elles ont adopté une politique officielle en vertu de laquelle les aumôniers doivent servir les membres de toutes les religions au mieux de leurs capacités et de façon aussi ouverte que possible (MDN, 2003). En outre, les cérémonies publiques, telles que les services du jour du Souvenir, doivent être aussi inclusives que possible. D'ailleurs, lors d'événements récents, tel que le dévoilement de la Tombe du Soldat inconnu et la bénédiction des drapeaux du collège militaire royal à Kingston, l'Aumônier général a invité les membres des communautés bouddhistes, hindoues, autochtones, juive et musulmane à prendre part aux cérémonies (MDN, 2001a, 2007b; Gorniak, 2001).

Cependant, malgré les politiques d'inclusion et d'accommodements religieux, il est difficile pour des aumôniers chrétiens de servir des croyants d'autres horizons religieux. L'aumônier Kevin Dingwell fait état de cette difficulté lorsqu'il décrit sa volonté de satisfaire aux besoins spirituels des civils et du

personnel militaire pendant sa mission en Bosnie, au moment des attentats du 11 septembre 2001. Il dit :

« La première personne à solliciter un soutien spirituel (après les attentats terroristes)... (était un adepte) wiccan. Comment un aumônier chrétien peut-il aider une personne venant d'une communauté religieuse si différente à surmonter de tels défis émotionnels et spirituels? J'ai tenu un service commémoratif afin que tous, soldats et civils, puissent se recueillir et prier. Il y avait environ trois cents personnes de nombreuses croyances religieuses, y compris un bon nombre d'employés locaux. La plupart de ces employés civils, si ce n'est tous, étaient musulmans. » [trad. libre] (Dingwell, 2004)

Aujourd'hui, sur les 320 aumôniers de la force de réserve et de la force régulière, deux seulement ne sont pas de confession chrétienne. Les besoins en dotation de la direction des services de l'aumônerie sont fondés sur les statistiques canadiennes sur la religion et l'on tente de recruter des chefs religieux qui proviennent des groupes les plus importants (Statistique Canada, 2003). En 2003, le capitaine Suleyman Demiry, premier aumônier musulman, s'est joint à la force régulière. En 2007, un rabbin engagé (MDN, 2007c; Gallows, 2007). Aucun autre aumônier d'une religion autre que chrétienne ne s'est joint à la direction depuis 2007 bien qu'elle continue de chercher à recruter d'autres dirigeants de religions minoritaires.

C'est le Comité interconfessionnel pour l'aumônerie militaire canadienne (CIAMC), un sous-comité du Conseil canadien des Églises, en collaboration avec l'Aumônier général (MDN, 2001b), qui décide qui peut se joindre à la direction. Bien que les dirigeants reli-

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gieux d'autres confessions soient invités à intégrer la direction, l'aumônerie relève toujours du Conseil canadien des Églises. En outre, les candidats provenant de groupes qui ne sont pas reconnus par le Conseil (comme les païens, les wiccan et autres associations et groupes religieux vaguement affiliés) ne sont pas admissibles au titre d'aumônier militaire (MDN, 2001b, p. IX-2). On justifie cette exclusivité en disant vouloir s'assurer d'une formation pastorale adéquate et de conditions d'admission uniformes. Le problème de ce modèle, c'est qu'il favorise intrinsèquement le clergé chrétien, formé selon le modèle pédagogique occidental, et exclura probablement les hindous, les aînés autochtones, les païens et les autres cultures religieuses dont les dirigeants spirituels ne sont généralement pas formés de cette façon.

Les politiques de Défense nationale répondent maintenant à la question des accommodements religieux en permettant des modifications à certains signes de conformité des Forces canadiennes, soit l'uniforme et les règles relatives à la moustache et la barbe et à la longueur des cheveux pour les hommes (ASDFC, 2005). Les membres autochtones ont le droit d'avoir des cheveux plus longs que le règlement habituel ne le permet, généralement coiffés en une ou deux tresses. Les sikh peuvent porter un turban ou un autre couvre-chef à condition que ceux-ci soient conformes aux règlements de sécurité sur le port du casque. Les chrétiens orthodoxes (ou les juifs, musulmans ou sikh) peuvent porter la barbe tant qu'elle est conforme aux règlements de sécurité sur l'équipement opérationnel et le matériel de travail tel que les masques à gaz. Les femmes musulmanes peuvent porter un uniforme large

La religion dans l'armée : l'adaptation à une société de plus en plus pluraliste

Historiquement, le christianisme a occupé une position de choix dans l'armée canadienne, compte tenu de sa place prééminente dans la société canadienne et de la participation constante du clergé chrétien à l'aumônerie militaire. Cependant, si la majorité des membres des Forces canadiennes continue d'être principalement de confession chrétienne, l'immigration croissante en provenance de pays dont les cultures religieuses prédominantes sont autres que chrétienne ébranle les postulats ancrés dans la culture militaire canadienne et pose de nouveaux défis pour l'aumônerie majoritairement chrétienne. Ce nouveau pluralisme engendre un besoin grandissant d'accommodements religieux et des luttes soutenues pour surmonter les structures et coutumes

traditionnelles qui excluent les membres des forces armées de confessions autres que chrétiennes. Dans cet article, nous examinons certains des défis que pose la diversité religieuse croissante de la société canadienne, à partir des conclusions d'un projet de recherche qualitatif sur le rôle

L'aumônerie chrétienne dans un environnement multiconfessionnel

de la religion dans les Forces canadiennes. Dans cette étude, la recherche élargie est fondée sur des entretiens approfondis et semi-structurés avec 32 membres des forces armées (16 aumôniers et 16 membres n'appartenant pas au clergé) qui se sont déroulés entre septembre 2004 et septembre 2007. Cette analyse nous éclaire sur les difficultés de travailler dans un environnement multiconfessionnel et montre que les accommodements religieux et l'intégration aux institutions canadiennes doivent faire l'objet d'une recherche politique plus poussée, dans la mesure où ces différences de religions peuvent représenter une source de conflit, de méconnaissance et de discrimination.

Tel qu'on le souligne ailleurs dans ce numéro, même si le pluralisme ethnoreligieux de la société canadienne reste assez limité, il grandit rapidement au sein de la population et des Forces canadiennes. Bien que ces dernières ne comptent pas de statistiques sur l'identité religieuse de leurs membres, des entretiens avec des commandants d'unité et avec du personnel indiquent que c'est particulièrement le cas des unités de réserve situées dans les grands centres urbains, tels que Vancouver, Montréal et Toronto, où l'on retrouve généralement le plus de populations immigrantes (Jedwab, 2004). Par exemple, un réserviste de la région de Toronto m'a confié que son unité comprenait des chrétiens, des hindous, des musulmans, des juifs, des sikhs, des zoroastriens, des païens et des adeptes de religions autochtones. Un aumônier de Montréal a déclaré que son unité était composée d'Asiatiques, d'Africains, de Sud-américains, de personnes d'Europe de l'Est, de musulmans, de chrétiens, de juifs, de sikhs et de personnes « sans religion » (Benham Rennie, 2006).

Faire echo à la diversité religieuse dans une société multiculturelle : l'exemple de l'Australie

Demandé par le gouvernement fédéral de l'Australie et publié par le ministère de l'Immigration et des Affaires multiculturelles et autochtones et Australian Multicultural Foundation avec World Conference of Religions for Peace, l'université RMIT et l'université Monash (2004), *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia: A Partnership under the Australian Governments Living In Harmony Initiative*.

Demandé par le gouvernement fédéral de l'Australie et publié par le ministère de l'Immigration et des Affaires multiculturelles et autochtones, ce rapport traite du rôle des traditions confessionnelles et des communautés religieuses dans un pays marqué par la diversité religieuse et ethnique. On y souligne que la religion a toujours joué un rôle important dans l'édification des valeurs sociales et morales fondamentales en Australie.

Un effort conscient est toutefois nécessaire pour conserver l'harmonie entre diverses communautés religieuses et ethniques. Ce rapport se fonde sur la notion voulant que le capital social, tant sur les plans intra-groupes que sur celui des rapprochements inter-groupes est essentiel à

l'acceptation mutuelle entre les groupes au sein de la population et au bien-être des personnes et de la société dans son ensemble. Il brosse un tableau historique de l'évolution de la diversité religieuse en Australie, analyse les relations interconfessionnelles et traite des défis engendrés par la diversité religieuse et ethnique. On y indique aussi comment l'Australie, où règne une diversité de plus en plus grande, peut continuer à vivre dans l'harmonie religieuse et ethnique. Les recommandations qu'il contient portent entre autres sur 1) l'organisation d'un forum annuel consultatif multiconfessionnel pour conseiller le gouvernement sur les dossiers liés à l'inter-religion et aux relations intercommunautaires connexes 2) la création d'un répertoire électronique des communautés religieuses 3) la prestation de cours d'anglais et d'une formation d'orientation poussée sur l'Australie aux dirigeants religieux fraîchement arrivés 4) la récitation d'une prière relevant d'un groupe confessionnel différent tous les jours avant d'entreprendre les séances au parlement et 5) la réalisation de recherches plus poussées pour analyser la place de la religion dans l'éducation.

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confessionnels, puisse justifier une exemption de ce cours obligatoire. Un autre mouvement maintient des critiques soutenues à l'égard de ce nouveau cours pour d'autres motifs, soit le

Mouvement laïque québécois (MLQ). Pour le MLQ, la religion doit être confi-

née strictement à la vie privée, puisqu'elle n'aurait pas sa place dans un espace sécularisé et que tout discours sur la religion impose une certaine reconnaissance de cette source d'obscurantisme qu'est la religion.

L'école et la religion, une compatibilité démocratique

L'orientation normative adoptée par le gouvernement québécois dans ce nouveau cours s'inscrit sans aucun doute dans un nouveau paradigme civique. La mutation accélérée du paysage scolaire québécois entre 1996 et 2008 reflète non seulement l'évolution des priorités en matière éducative, mais apparaît comme un révélateur sociologique du rapport de la société québécoise aux droits fondamentaux et au pluralisme moral et religieux. Ce changement normatif favorable à la laïcité est donc porteur d'une conception plus inclusive de l'école, dans laquelle la reconnaissance de la diversité culturelle et religieuse et le respect de l'égalité des individus deviennent les vecteurs d'une éducation préparatoire à la vie démocratique. En effet, la participation citoyenne en contexte démocratique suppose que les citoyens puissent orienter leurs choix éthiques et en débattre, en puisant à leurs convictions les plus profondes (morales et religieuses), lesquelles peuvent diverger ou même entrer en contradiction les unes avec les autres. L'éducation a donc un rôle à jouer dans le développement chez les jeunes de « vertus » ou d'aptitudes propices à la délibération pacifique et à la tolérance : la reconnaissance de la diversité des conceptions du monde, le respect de la différence, la capacité de

penser en termes de réciprocité, entre autres. D'ailleurs, un certain consensus social au Canada et au Québec, situé autour de 75 %, appuie ce type d'éducation au phénomène religieux à l'école (CRTC, 2004; Ouellet, 2005).

Conclusion : la laïcité et les signes religieux à l'école

Si les Québécois se montrent, en grande majorité, favorables à ce nouvel aménagement des rapports entre l'école et les religions relatif à l'enseignement et aux structures scolaires, ils paraissent plus divisés en ce qui concerne l'expression de l'appartenance religieuse par des signes particuliers à l'école. La question des accommodements raisonnables pour motifs religieux a déclenché les passions au sein d'une partie de la population. Entre autres, l'accommodement consenti à un jeune sikh de porter son kirpan à l'école publique (*Multani c. Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys*, 2006 CSC 6) a fait dire à plusieurs que la majorité avait sorti la religion des écoles et que les minorités la réintégraient à nouveau. La problématique des accommodements consentis pour des motifs religieux a pris une telle ampleur médiatique que le gouvernement de M. Jean Charest a jugé opportun de créer une « Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles », en mars 2007. L'attention médiatique accordée aux situations erronément associées à celles-ci était complètement disproportionnée par rapport aux réalités sur le terrain. Si les accommodements raisonnables, en vertu du principe d'égalité inscrit dans les chartes des droits de la personne, ne se rapportent pas tous au monde scolaire, ceux qui sont accordés dans les écoles semblent aggraver plus que tout autre. Le plan le voile islamique, est au premier débat. Une école laïque doit-elle

Une interprétation inexacte mais renacée de la laïcité sous-tend ce mécontentement dans la population. Pour plusieurs citoyens, la laïcité de l'école devrait, selon le modèle adopté en France, s'appliquer non seulement aux règlements scolaires et aux programmes d'éducation, mais aussi aux personnes qui se retrouvent dans cette institution, enseignants et élèves. Or, au Québec comme au Canada, la liberté de conscience et de religion est corrélatrice de la liberté d'expression. Surtout, on voit mal comment on pourrait justifier un cours d'éthique et de culture religieuse dans l'école, ayant pour but l'ouverture à la diversité, tout en interdisant à cette même diversité de s'y exprimer.

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s'étaient adaptées à la nouvelle configuration laïque de l'École. Cependant, une « coalition pour la liberté de choix en éducation » s'est formée dans le but de permettre aux parents qui le souhaitent d'avoir le choix pour leur enfant entre un enseignement confessionnel traditionnel et le nouveau cours d'éthique et de culture religieuse. Ce dernier est perçu comme une menace pour l'identité religieuse de l'enfant (on dit craindre que l'enfant soit « mêlé » en étant exposé aux différences religieuses) et que le « relativisme » soit le résultat d'un rel apprentissage sur les cultures religieuses. Ces parents, peu nombreux mais très militants, exigent que leurs enfants soient exemptés du cours obligatoire d'éthique et de culture religieuse, au nom de la liberté de conscience et de religion. Ils ont d'ailleurs formé un mouvement de protestation (la Coalition pour la liberté en éducation). À la rentrée scolaire de 2008, quelques centaines de parents ont exigé une exemption pour leur enfant, mais les directions d'établissement n'ont pas donné suite à cette requête. La ministre de l'Éducation est demeurée ferme sur le fait que le cours d'éthique et de culture religieuse restera un cours obligatoire pour tous les élèves. Le cours consistant en la connaissance et la compréhension des religions, l'argument de la liberté de conscience et de religion ne paraît pas, à première vue, un argument pertinent. Surtout, la démonstration n'est pas établie qu'un cours qui ne vise qu'une meilleure connaissance du patrimoine religieux ne soit pas étayé par la liberté de conscience, comme c'était le cas pour les enseignements religieux

gouvernement du Québec de ne plus avoir recours aux clauses dérogatoires des chartes de droits de la personne afin de maintenir des enseignements religieux confessionnels à l'école publique. Les oppositions se font moins vives, certains ont rallié la tendance à l'acceptation de ce nouveau cours. Trois visées représentent alors le compromis permettant de rendre obligatoire un cours sur la religion, alors que tant de sociétés ont échoué à cet égard.

La Loi modifiant diverses dispositions législatives de nature confessionnelle dans le domaine de l'éducation (loi 95), adoptée le 15 juin 2005, a remplacé les cours d'enseignement religieux confessionnel (catholique et protestant) par un cours obligatoire d'éthique et de culture religieuse à l'automne 2008. Les orientations de ce nouveau programme s'inscrivent nettement dans une perspective d'éducation à la citoyenneté et visent à favoriser le vivre ensemble. Pour y parvenir, le cours d'éthique et de culture religieuse vise trois grands objectifs. Premièrement, la familiarisation avec l'héritage religieux du Québec inclut tant les religions chrétiennes que le judaïsme et les spiritualités amérindiennes. Deuxièmement, l'ouverture à la diversité religieuse veut permettre à l'élève de s'ouvrir à cette diversité et à son apport à la société québécoise. Enfin, on veut permettre au jeune de se situer de façon réfléchie dans l'univers des convictions (MELS, 2005, p. 10).

Cette perspective éducative adoptée par le gouvernement n'a pas soulevé de grands débats en 2005, comme ce fut le cas en 1999 pour la laïcisation scolaire. On peut présumer que les mentalités

ment sa place à l'école (MLQ, 1999). Face à ces tensions, le gouvernement a décidé d'agir par étapes.

En 2000, le gouvernement rend possible une première phase de transition en adoptant la *Loi modifiant diverses dispositions législatives dans le secteur de l'éducation concernant la confessionnalité* (loi 118). Toutes les structures scolaires confessionnelles, du ministère de l'Éducation jusqu'aux écoles, se voient laïcisées. Cette loi a mis fin au partage historique des compétences en éducation entre l'État et les Églises. Seuls sont maintenus, par la loi 118, les enseignements religieux catholique et protestant. L'ambivalence de cette solution de compromis d'aménagement hybride entre la confessionnalité et la laïcité, visant la conciliation des attentes concurrentes, ne pouvait que confirmer son caractère temporaire.

Un comité-conseil est créé par la loi 118, le Comité sur les affaires religieuses. Il a le mandat de suivre l'évolution de la société québécoise et de faire ses recommandations au gouvernement. Après analyses et réflexions, le Comité sur les affaires religieuses publie, en 2004, un avis intitulé *La mise en place d'un programme d'éthique et de culture religieuse : Une orientation d'avenir pour tous les jeunes du Québec*. Il recommande de tirer les conséquences nécessaires de la réalité laïque de l'école et que « de nouvelles orientations s'imposent [pour ces programmes] dans le contexte actuel de l'école laïque et ouverte ». Le comité recommande de remplacer les cours d'enseignement religieux confessionnel par un cours unique et obligatoire d'éthique et de culture religieuse. Le gouvernement décide de faire sienne cette recommandation et ainsi, de donner le mandat à l'École de former des citoyens ouverts au pluralisme moral et religieux de la société. Cette perspective civique de l'enseignement permettrait au

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l'école, de définir les orientations pertinentes et de proposer des moyens en vue de leur mise en oeuvre.

Dans son rapport final *Laïcité et religions : Perspective nouvelle pour l'école québécoise*, publié en 1999, le Groupe de travail a formulé plusieurs recommandations, dont celle de laïciser le système scolaire et de remplacer les enseignements religieux confessionnels par un enseignement culturel des religions. Ces recommandations se fondent sur une reconnaissance entière des droits fondamentaux (l'égalité et la liberté de conscience et de religion) et du paysage social, marqué par la sécularisation et le pluralisme moral et religieux (Groupe de travail sur la religion à l'école, 1999, p. 119-133). Le rapport recommande l'instauration d'une « laïcité ouverte », c'est-à-dire qui n'exclut pas la reconnaissance du fait religieux, à la fois dans le respect de la liberté de conscience et de religion de ceux et celles qui fréquentent l'école et dans l'enseignement.

La proposition de remplacer les enseignements confessionnels par un cours de culture religieuse est compatible avec la neutralité nécessaire de l'État et répond à la mission de socialisation de l'école. À cet égard, les justifications énoncées révèlent une conception de la réalité religieuse comme une donnée de l'expérience personnelle et sociale qu'il importe de prendre en considération dans l'éducation. L'extrait qui suit illustre bien l'orientation normative de cette importante recommandation :

L'enseignement culturel des religions veut répondre pour sa part aux quatre buts que l'État doit assigner à l'école en vue d'assurer à l'élève une formation adéquate comme citoyen : il permet aux jeunes d'accéder aux biens culturels en matière religieuse;

il leur assure d'accéder à une pluralité de points de vue qui sont susceptibles de contribuer à la formation progressive d'un jugement moral autonome

et critiques; il leur permet de développer des attitudes de tolérance, mieux d'appréciation envers les différentes manières, religieuses comme séculières, de concevoir le monde; enfin, il contribue à se socialiser à un « nous » enrichi par l'appropriation et l'ap-préciation éventuelle des différents héritages religieux, ceux que la tradition chrétienne a légués à ses habitants mais d'assurer une gestion de ces rapports de forces en adoptant en quelque sorte le rôle d'arbitre des intérêts divergents. Ceci explique sans doute, du moins en partie, pourquoi le terme laïcité ne revient nulle part pour définir le processus de déconfessionnalisation, aussi bien dans le texte de la Loi 118 que dans le document d'orientation qui l'accompagne¹. Par contre, dans l'allou-

tion de présentation du projet de Loi 118, le ministre de l'Éducation rejette explicitement l'approche communautaire-rienne. Il justifie ce rejet par les dangers de ghettoïsation, par les coûts prohibitifs et les difficultés de gestion administrative que comporterait une telle diversification et extension des droits aux différents groupes religieux. Le ministre affirme avoir choisi une approche « pragmatique » qui ne cherche pas « à concilier la diversité des points de vue »². Le réel défi a été de surmonter la polarisation des critiques : la demande pour conserver le choix d'une éducation confessionnelle dans l'école (Lefebvre, 2000), d'une part et d'autre part, la position selon laquelle tout discours sur la religion n'a aucune-

La volonté d'ouverture au pluralisme a donc été formulée selon une logique d'inclusion à la fois géographique (fréquentation des mêmes écoles publiques par tous afin de ne plus diviser les enfants selon leur appartenance religieuse) et éducative (enseignement sur les cultures religieuses afin d'ouvrir les jeunes à la compréhension de l'autre et au dialogue). L'une des finalités universelles de l'éducation étant de promouvoir les droits de la personne et d'éduquer à ces droits, on voit mal comment une école qui contredit dans son organisation même ces principes pourrait encourager les enfants à les respecter. Par ailleurs, les enquêtes menées pour le Groupe de travail (Milot et Proulx, 1999) ont révélé qu'il existait un large consensus social en faveur de l'égalité des droits en matière de religion. Néanmoins, les partisans de

La volonté d'ouverture au pluralisme a donc été formulée selon une logique d'inclusion à la fois géographique et éducative.

la laïcité et ceux en faveur du statu quo s'affrontèrent lors d'une commission parlementaire sur l'Éducation, tenue en 1999. À une conception de la laïcité ouverte des premiers, les seconds opposaient ce qu'ils considéraient comme un « droit » des parents à ce que l'école publique éduque leur enfant selon leurs propres convictions religieuses. La position politique du ministre de l'Éducation a consisté à ne pas s'inscrire explicitement dans l'une ou l'autre des configurations normatives

définies par les forces en présence, mais d'assurer une gestion de ces rapports de forces en adoptant en quelque sorte le rôle d'arbitre des intérêts divergents. Ceci explique sans doute, du moins en partie, pourquoi le terme laïcité ne revient nulle part pour définir le processus de déconfessionnalisation, aussi bien dans le texte de la Loi 118 que dans le document d'orientation qui l'accompagne¹. Par contre, dans l'allou-

1 Dans les écoles publiques du Québec : Une réponse à la diversité des attentes morales et religieuses, gouvernement du Québec, ministère de l'Éducation, 2000.

2 Ibid, p. 3.

Contestée depuis les années soixante, cette organisation est apparue encore plus problématique avec la proclamation de la *Charte québécoise des droits et libertés de la personne* (1975). Une illustration frappante de cette contradiction entre confessionnalité scolaire et respect des droits fondamentaux réside dans la

Ministère de l'Éducation (1964), affirmait qu'il fallait tenir compte « du caractère pluraliste, au point de vue religieux, que prend maintenant le Québec [...] des parents ne partageant pas ou ne partageant plus la foi catholique ou la foi protestante ou n'appartenant à aucune religion » (vol. 4, art. 100). Le système accordait des droits particuliers à deux seules confessions, les catholiques et les protestants. Le rapport recommandait d'ouvrir un secteur non-confessionnel, là où le nombre le justifiait. Cette recommandation n'a jamais été mise en application et était irréalisable, car elle aurait supposé que les personnes appartenant à une même confession minoritaire soient démographiquement concentrées.

La nécessité de repenser une configuration scolaire séculaire

Le déficit de légitimité du système scolaire confessionnel s'explique par un certain nombre de changements qui marquaient la société québécoise, lesquels étaient déjà évoqués dans le Rapport de la Commission royale d'enquête sur l'éducation, dès 1963. Ce rapport, qui avait recommandé la création du

Après une trentaine d'années de débats larvées sur la question de la place de la religion dans l'univers scolaire, le système est officiellement remis en question par des commissions d'étude mises en place par le gouvernement. La Commission des États généraux sur l'éducation recommande, même dans l'école. En effet, pour s'adapter à l'évolution de leur population étudiante, les enseignants arténaient de plus en plus les contenus axés sur la transmission de la foi, la transmission de l'aspect confessionnel de l'éducation. Le système scolaire s'inscrivait de plus en contradiction aux politiques éducatives et d'intégration du Québec, notamment l'*Enoncé de politique en matière d'immigration et d'intégration* (ministère des Communautés culturelles

En plus d'adopter au principe de l'égalité à l'égard des autres confessions religieuses et des non-croyants, l'aménagement confessionnel de l'école publique se trouvait en décalage par rapport aux changements socioreligieux de la société québécoise. L'augmentation des flux migratoires en provenance d'Asie, des Caraïbes, d'Afrique et d'Amérique latine depuis les années 1970 contribuait à transformer le paysage culturel et religieux québécois et par conséquent, les besoins éducatifs des élèves en matière de religion. La sécularisation de la société gagnait également de plus en plus de terrain... même dans l'école. En effet, pour s'adapter à l'évolution de leur population étudiante, les enseignants arténaient de plus en plus les contenus axés sur la transmission de la foi, la transmission de l'aspect confessionnel de l'éducation. Le système scolaire s'inscrivait de plus en contradiction aux politiques éducatives et d'intégration du Québec, notamment l'*Enoncé de politique en matière d'immigration et d'intégration* (ministère des Communautés culturelles

nécessité, pour le gouvernement, de recourir aux *clauses dérogatoires* des chartes des droits de la personne, tant canadienne que québécoise. Ces dérogations étaient nécessaires pour conserver la légalité des enseignements confessionnels, à l'abri des éventuelles contestations judiciaires sur l'aspect discriminatoire du système.

Les changements législatifs et les

« arguments » normatifs

qui les fondent

Après une trentaine d'années de débats larvées sur la question de la place de la religion dans l'univers scolaire, le système est officiellement remis en question par des commissions d'étude mises en place par le gouvernement. La Commission des États généraux sur l'éducation recommande, en 1996, de « déverrouiller » la confessionnalité scolaire, scellée par l'article 93 de la Constitution canadienne. Suite à une vaste consultation publique, où partisans de la laïcité et de la confessionnalité s'affrontent, cette recommandation explicite en faveur de la laïcisation se fonde sur la nécessité « d'assurer à tous les élèves l'éducation aux valeurs communes que nous souhaitons partager », et ainsi « achever la séparation de l'Église et de l'État » (Commission des États généraux sur l'éducation, 1996, p. 55). En décembre 1997, le gouvernement du Parti québécois, appuyé par les autres partis de l'Assemblée nationale, entreprend les démarches auprès du gouvernement canadien pour soit amender l'article 93 de la *Loi constitutionnelle de 1867*. Au même moment, un Groupe de travail sur la religion à l'école est mis sur pied par la ministre de l'Éducation, avec le mandat d'examiner tous les aspects relatifs à la place de la religion à

et de l'Immigration, 1991) et la *Politique en matière d'intégration scolaire et d'éducation interculturelle* (ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, 1998), deux textes importants clairement axés sur le respect de l'égalité et du pluralisme. Ces mutations sociologiques et juridiques rendaient de moins en moins légitime le maintien d'un système scolaire confessionnel.

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L'aménagement des rapports entre l'école et la religion au Québec a connu des transformations majeures entre 1997 et 2008. En une dizaine d'années, le système scolaire confessionnel a été entièrement laïcisé, des structures de l'État jusqu'à l'enseignement religieux. Historiquement, le système d'éducation du Québec a reposé sur une division entre les catholiques et les protestants. Lors de la Confédération canadienne de 1867, l'éducation devenait de juridiction provinciale selon les principes de répartition des juridictions entre le Parlement fédéral et ceux des provinces. Les protestants, minoritaires dans la province de Québec, ont exigé d'avoir pleine juridiction administrative sur leurs écoles. Les catholiques, minoritaires dans les trois autres provinces confédérées, expriment la même exigence (Lamonde, 2000, p. 351).

La religion dans le système scolaire public au Québec : Un changement pour l'égalité et la diversité

L'insertion de l'article 93 dans l'Acte de l'Amérique du Nord britannique (AANB) visait précisément à protéger les admissions scolaires des catholiques et des protestants de ces provinces, et ce, dans les régions où ces groupes se trouvaient minoritaires. La protection constitutionnelle s'étendait aussi aux écoles primaires des villes de Montréal et

Québec. Les écoles publiques catholiques étaient fréquentées par les élèves Canadiens français catholiques (seules quelques écoles étaient anglo-catholiques) et tous les élèves « non catholiques » se retrouvaient dans les écoles protestantes, en grande majorité anglophones. Ainsi, pendant plus d'un siècle, l'éducation publique au Québec a joué un rôle important dans la reproduction des marqueurs religieux mais aussi linguistiques.

Lorsque le gouvernement québécois a officiellement pris en charge l'éducation en 1964, par la loi créant le ministère de l'Éducation et le Conseil supérieur de l'éducation (bill 60), il a maintenu un comité catholique et un comité protestant au sein du Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation. Ces comités assumaient une fonction normative et décisionnelle de premier plan dans l'orientation des projets éducatifs des écoles catholiques ou protestantes, dans celle des programmes d'éducation religieuse et dans la qualification des maîtres. Le caractère confessionnel du système scolaire demeurait fortement garanti.


L'année 1997 marque le début d'importantes transformations dans ce système scolaire. Ce processus s'amorce avec la demande du gouvernement du Québec d'amender l'article 93 de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1867, de manière à obtenir les pleins pouvoirs afin de redéfinir les commissions scolaires sur une base linguistique plutôt que confessionnelle. Le déblocage constitutionnel a ouvert la voie à une série de recommandations formulées par plusieurs organismes-conseils du gouvernement pour que les écoles et l'enseignement religieux soient mieux adaptés aux évolutions que connaissait la société québécoise. La volonté de faire de l'école un lieu d'accueil de la diversité et de respect de l'égalité de tous les citoyens a été le fondement de la décision gouvernementale de laïciser l'éducation.

plus, en partenariat avec l'organisation Australian Multicultural Foundation et la conférence mondiale Religions for Peace, le ministère de l'Immigration, du Multiculturalisme et des Affaires autochtones a produit un guide sur l'établissement de réseaux interconfessionnels communautaires (Cahill et Leahy, 2004).

Au Canada, il existe déjà plusieurs organismes œuvrant en faveur du dialogue interconfessionnel, tels que le Conseil canadien des Églises et d'autres organismes religieux ayant mis sur pied diverses initiatives¹⁰ sans compter la panoplie de groupes locaux, régionaux et nationaux impliqués dans le dialogue interconfessionnel¹¹. La pièce manquante au Canada est le soutien par le gouvernement et sa reconnaissance des groupes interconfessionnels comme c'est le cas au Royaume-Uni et en Australie à l'échelle nationale et locale (bien qu'il n'existe pas encore d'études sur le succès ou l'échec de ces conseils au Royaume-Uni et en Australie).

Les limites du dialogue interconfessionnel et des mesures de sensibilisation

Si le dialogue entre les religions mondiales est une des clés d'une cohabitation sereine à l'intérieur d'une société et entre les sociétés, il ne faut pas s'attendre à ce qu'il triomphe comme par magie des conflits, de la méfiance et de l'ignorance. Il s'agit en fait d'un premier pas important faisant partie intégrante d'une série d'efforts coordonnés de lutte à l'intolérance religieuse et à la discrimination. Une fois franchie, cette première étape soulèvera toutefois des questions difficiles. Par exemple, comment les gouvernements fédéral, provinciaux et municipaux pourront-ils orienter leur

Toute épineuses qu'elles soient, ces questions ne doivent pas ébranler notre détermination à promouvoir la liberté de religion et la diversité par un appui financier au dialogue interconfessionnel et aux initiatives d'éducation populaire. Les Canadiens ont connu des obstacles dans le passé et ils ne devraient pas reculer devant l'enjeu de la diversité religieuse aujourd'hui. On croit généralement qu'il est impossible de discuter de religion de manière civilisée ou de faire des compromis concernant les enseignements et les pratiques religieuses. La religion, dit-on, rend les gens plus conservateurs, plus rigides et peu enclins au compromis. Les études démontrent que cette vision de la religion est caricaturale. S'il ne fait aucun doute que certaines communautés et certains penseurs sont exclusivistes et intransigeants, la religion a beaucoup plus souvent favorisé l'inclusion des autres et certaines communautés ont évolué ou même changé complètement de cap sur certains enjeux importants. Il n'y a pas si longtemps, les gens croyaient que l'identité ethnique était immuable, que certains groupes ethniques ne pouvaient tout simplement pas vivre et travailler ensemble. L'expérience canadienne du multiculturalisme prouve le contraire. La religion n'est pas si différente des autres aspects de la culture. Les Canadiens ont appris à surmonter les différences issues de l'ethnicité et à célébrer la diversité. Notre défi, au 21^e siècle, sera de travailler ensemble malgré les différences religieuses et de nous réjouir des identités religieuses multiples. 

soutien vers certains groupes ou organismes en particulier? Si, par exemple, la Conférence canadienne des évêques catholiques peut agir comme représentant des Canadiens catholiques (bien qu'un certain nombre de catholiques puissent s'y objecter), il est plus difficile d'identifier un représentant pour les musulmans canadiens ou les hindous canadiens puisque ces communautés sont dispersées sur le territoire, vivent des dissensions internes et que leur organisation est décentralisée. Les imams, tout comme les prêtres hindous, ont un statut et un rôle au sein de l'islam et de l'hindouisme différents de ceux des prêtres catholiques romains et des ministres protestants dans la chrétienté. Le choix de participants à ce dialogue pose une question encore plus controversée : faut-il tenter de mobiliser (et si oui de quelle façon) les communautés (ou plus précisément certains segments de population au sein de ces communautés) plus réticentes à participer et qui remettent fondamentalement en question les valeurs canadiennes? Les membres de communautés religieuses qui participent à ces groupes interconfessionnels sont généralement prédisposés à respecter les autres, à éviter le prosélytisme et à chercher à surmonter les différences par le dialogue et la recherche du compromis. Il est plus difficile, mais aussi peut-être plus impératif, de mobiliser les membres les plus intransigeants et les plus radicaux parmi ces communautés. Se pose alors la question de savoir comment les intégrer à la table sans paraître rendre légitime la remise en cause des valeurs de la société en général. Ces questions sont importantes et épineuses à la fois.

10 Voir, par exemple, la page web de la Commission Foi et Témoignage du Conseil canadien des Églises au <<http://www.ccc-ccc.ca/english/faiht/inter.htm>>. (Consulté en ligne le 2 novembre 2008).

11 Pour une liste partielle, voir <<http://www.ccc-ccc.ca/english/downloads/GroupsCentres.pdf>>. (Consulté en ligne le 2 novembre 2008)

Les conseils interconfessionnels : un exemple de l'Australie

Les auteurs de *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia* suggèrent que les responsabilités suivantes soient attribuées au Council for Multicultural Australia et inscrites dans son cadre de référence :

1. conseiller le gouvernement australien sur toute question touchant les communautés religieuses et l'harmonie et la coopération interconfessionnelles, dans le but de favoriser le mieux-être social et économique du pays ainsi que de prévenir la montée de toute forme d'extrémisme religieux;
2. en se fondant sur les résultats de consultations avec les dirigeants de communautés religieuses et des membres de ces communautés, donner des avis éclairés sur les politiques et programmes touchant l'harmonie et la coopération interconfessionnelles et en faire le suivi et l'évaluation;
3. en partenariat avec les dirigeants de communautés religieuses, organiser des cérémonies, des services religieux et des spectacles à saveur historique qui témoignent de l'unité de la société multiconfessionnelle australienne à l'occasion de célébrations, de cérémonies du souvenir ou d'événements tragiques nationaux et internationaux;
4. donner au gouvernement des conseils éclairés sur les politiques et pratiques concernant l'entrée au pays de personnel religieux, que ce soit sur une base temporaire ou permanente;
5. superviser et surveiller les programmes d'orientation et de perfectionnement pour le personnel religieux nouvellement arrivé en Australie, autant pour les célébrants de mariages que pour le personnel religieux en général;
6. diffuser de l'information sur les politiques et programmes gouvernementaux aux communautés religieuses ainsi qu'à leurs dirigeants, notamment par l'entremise de réseaux électroniques rassemblant les dirigeants religieux et les membres de leurs communautés;
7. soutenir les responsables de gouvernements locaux et travailler en partenariat avec eux, et entretenir les réseaux interconfessionnels locaux;
8. en collaboration avec les communautés et les médias, sensibiliser le public sur le rôle et les fonctions des traditions religieuses dans les affaires locales, nationales et internationales;
9. en partenariat avec le ministère des Affaires étrangères et du Commerce, promouvoir l'image et la réputation de l'Australie en tant que modèle d'harmonie interconfessionnelle;
10. surveiller les sites Internet des communautés ethniques et religieuses en repêchant les renseignements ou les liens vers d'autres sites qui peuvent porter atteinte à la cohésion sociale de l'Australie;

11. en partenariat avec les responsables en éducation du gouvernement et des États australiens, accroître les interactions et la coopération entre le gouvernement australien et les écoles confessionnelles et travailler à l'élaboration d'un programme de cours adaptés; et
12. mettre sur pied un centre de ressources mis à la disposition du gouvernement et des membres des communautés (Cahill *et al.*, 2004).

ment britannique décerne sa Strategy Grant au Interfaith Network, une organisation bénévole indépendante majoritairement par des dons privés, des organismes de bienfaisance et par les communautés religieuses qui en font partie. Depuis 2001, ce réseau travaille plus étroitement avec le gouvernement britannique, prodiguant des conseils à différents ministères sur des enjeux liés à la diversité religieuse au Royaume-Uni (Pearce, 2007)⁸. Les publications du réseau traduisent bien le genre de travail d'éducation qu'il accomplit. Elles comprennent notamment : *Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs, Women's Inter Faith Initiatives in the UK: A Survey, Looking After One Another: The Safety and Security of Our Faith Communities, Partnership for the Common Good: Inter Faith Structures and Local Government and Community Cohesion: A New Agenda for Inter Faith Relations?⁹.*

Le rapport australien *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia*, publié en 2004, propose la création d'un organisme interconfessionnel semblable qui jouerait le rôle de conseiller auprès du Council for Multicultural Australia et d'autres organisations gouvernementales (Cahill *et al.*, 2004, p. 119-120). Dans la foulée de ce rapport, le gouvernement australien a soutenu financièrement le Australian Partnership of Ethnic and Religious Organisations de même qu'un certain nombre de projets de Living in Harmony qui font la promotion du dialogue interconfessionnel (Rudland, 2006). De

- 8 Le réseau Inter Faith Network du Royaume-Uni fournit des ressources considérables : <http://www.interfaith.org.uk>

- 9 Ces publications peuvent être consultées à un coût modeste au <http://www.interfaith.org.uk/publications/index.htm> (Consulté en ligne le 2 novembre 2008)

L'expérience canadienne

Il existe plusieurs types de groupes inter-confessionnels au Canada. Par exemple, on retrouve de nombreux centres et

groupes œcuméniques – c'est-à-dire qui visent l'amélioration des relations entre confessions chrétiennes. Si d'autres groupes comme l'Interfaith Grand River, à Kitchener-Waterloo dans le Sud-Ouest de l'Ontario, rassemblent des représentants de plusieurs religions⁴, certains autres, comme le Christian-Jewish Dialogue de Toronto, se concentrent sur les relations entre deux communautés. Plusieurs de ces groupes financent des programmes d'éducation visant à faire connaître la richesse des différentes traditions religieuses au

pays et certains se concentrent sur des enjeux spécifiques, comme l'intolérance et la discrimination. C'est le cas du Conseil judéo-chrétien canadien, dont le programme vise à éradiquer l'intolérance et la discrimination dont font l'objet certaines personnes en raison de la race, de l'ethnicité ou de la religion. Ces groupes aident leurs membres à corriger des perceptions erronées, résultats de l'ignorance ou de la peur, de même qu'à

Si les gens d'appartenance religieuses différentes qui forment cette coalition peuvent être convaincus de ne jamais se croiser les uns les autres au paradis, ils peuvent en revanche se targuer de s'être rencontrés et d'avoir travaillé ensemble en Ontario.

trouver des solutions à des revendications historiques et des conflits transnationaux.

De plus, d'autres groupes religieux travaillent sur des enjeux précis, tels que le financement public pour l'éducation ou la crise écologique⁵. Le travail concerté sur des enjeux communs peut contribuer à surmonter les attitudes et les croyances religieuses exclusives, tels qu'illustre par l'expérience de la Coalition for Justice in Education Funding, formée d'évangéliques, de chrétiens, de juifs, de sikhs, de musulmans, d'Arméniens orthodoxes et de membres de l'Église adventiste du septième jour et dont l'objectif est d'amener le gouvernement ontarien à financer des écoles religieuses indépendantes au même titre que les écoles romaines catholiques autonomes. Si les gens d'appartenance religieuses différentes qui forment cette coalition peuvent être convaincus de ne jamais se croiser les uns les autres au paradis, ils peuvent en revanche se targuer de s'être rencontrés et d'avoir travaillé ensemble en Ontario. Le Canada n'ayant pas adopté de séparation formelle, à l'américaine, entre l'Église et l'État, et plusieurs institutions

gouvernementales (telles que les Forces armées canadiennes et les Services correctionnels du Canada) disposant d'au moins une des considérations pratiques plus immédiates commandent une attention particulière envers le dialogue entre les religions de la part des partisans de la diversité canadienne. Les aumônières des Services correctionnels canadiens et celles des Forces armées ont déployé des efforts exemplaires dans le but de reconnaître et d'accommoder les différentes formes d'expression religieuse (voir l'analyse de Benham Rennick dans ce numéro). Au-delà des considérations pragmatiques telles que la reconnaissance de jours sacrés, la mise à disposition d'espaces de prière et des ajustements apportés pour respecter les diètes religieuses, ces agences ont commencé à promouvoir un dialogue entre les groupes religieux afin de mieux servir leurs clients. Des responsables des domaines de la santé et de l'éducation répondent également de manière créative et ingénieuse à cet enjeu de la diversité religieuse (Lamoureux Scholtes, 2007, p. 7-9)⁷. Au Canada, les administrations publiques à tous les échelons (fédéral, provincial-territorial et municipal) pourraient soutenir davantage les organisations non gouvernementales à vocation religieuse dans leurs efforts d'éducation et de promotion d'un dialogue interconfessionnel. Le gouvernement fédéral, par exemple, pourrait reconnaître officiellement et soutenir financièrement certains groupes comme l'ont fait d'autres pays. Depuis 2001, le gouvernement

4 Ces groupes sont inscrits sur le site Internet de la Commission Foi et Témoignage du Conseil canadien des Églises à l'adresse <<http://www.ccc-ccc.ca/english/faith/inter.htm>>. (Consulté en ligne le 2 novembre 2008).

5 Voir <<http://www.cdtd.org>>. (Consulté en ligne le 2 novembre 2008)

6 Par exemple, le Canadian Forum on Religion and Ecology rassemble des participants de différentes confessions dans le but d'explorer des réponses spirituelles à la crise écologique.

7 Le Ontario Multifaith Council, un organisme sans but lucratif financé par un gouvernement provincial, est un réseau interconfessionnel non gouvernemental qui fournit aux agences gouvernementales, aux entreprises, aux organisations interconfessionnelles, aux groupes religieux et à la population en général de l'information et de la formation sur la diversité religieuse. Cependant, des réductions récentes dans son financement ont grandement affecté ses résultats.

et d'apaisement des conflits entre les groupes religieux ou de leurs visées que des amitiés et des relations personnelles qui s'y forment. Autrement dit, les rencontres en personne avec d'autres êtres humains amèneraient une meilleure acceptation de « l'autre » qui transcende les divergences doctrinales, éthiques ou pratiques. C'est à la suite des horreurs de l'Holocauste qu'on peut retracer les premières tentatives de dialogue interconfessionnel rassemblant juifs et chrétiens dans une lutte commune contre l'antisémitisme. La réforme de la législation sur l'immigration dans les années 60 a amené une deuxième vague de dialogues interconfessionnels qui comparaient des représentants de plusieurs traditions religieuses du monde entier et réfléchissaient la diversité de la composition démographique de l'immigration au pays. Plus récemment, l'urgence d'un tel dialogue s'est fait sentir dans le monde de l'après 11 septembre, où les Canadiens sont à la recherche d'une nouvelle façon de résoudre les conflits religieux, la discrimination et l'intolérance à l'égard des religions (Lamoureux Scholes, 2007, p. 6-7). L'expérience canadienne illustre de manière concrète la façon dont le dialogue interconfessionnel contribue à l'avancement du multiculturalisme.

Les partisans du multiculturalisme s'aperçoivent que l'ignorance et la peur à l'endroit des communautés religieuses, notamment les communautés religieuses minoritaires au Canada, peuvent saper la coopération et la recherche de compromis entre ces groupes et le reste de la société et à l'intérieur de ces mêmes groupes. Les différents intervenants constatent de plus en plus que le dialogue interconfessionnel et des mesures d'éducation sont les meilleurs outils dans l'atteinte des objectifs de la politique de multiculturalisme.

Le rôle du dialogue interconfessionnel

Le dialogue interconfessionnel – tel qu'on le comprend actuellement – est unique à la modernité et essentiel aux démocraties multiculturelles. Les participants à un tel dialogue ne cherchent pas à convertir l'autre ni à prouver la supériorité de sa propre tradition religieuse, mais plutôt, dans un esprit d'ouverture, à mieux se connaître les uns les autres, à explorer des enjeux religieux partagés (p. ex., quel est le sens de la souffrance?) ou à répondre à un enjeu de société (p. ex., comment pouvons-nous travailler ensemble pour faire avancer les droits humains?). Ces dialogues peuvent avoir lieu aussi bien à la base qu'entre dirigeants de communautés religieuses. Ils peuvent émerger spontanément ou être institutionnalisés. Enfin, ils peuvent chercher à atteindre un but particulier ou représenter une fin en soi.

Dernière tous ces efforts, on assiste à la négociation du pluralisme religieux – c'est-à-dire à des efforts de coopération

pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles (la Commission Bouchard-Taylor). De plus en plus, les médias et les chercheurs se rendent compte de l'importance de la religion dans la formation de l'identité de nombreux Canadiens, qu'ils soient nés ici ou à l'étranger. À preuve, la religion est régulièrement au programme des conférences portant sur l'intégration des immigrants, sur le multiculturalisme et sur la diversité canadienne. De plus, ce sujet a fait l'objet de nombreux numéros spéciaux de revues telles que : *Diversity* canadienne, *Canadian-American Research Series* et *Journal of International Migration and Integration*. Ce numéro d'*Horizons*, tout comme l'atelier récent (tenu en novembre 2008) sur la religion, le laïcisme et le multiculturalisme financé par l'Ethnicity and Democratic Governance Project sont autant de preuves que la religion est devenue un sujet de recherche légitime au sein des milieux universitaires et gouvernementaux.

Si les choses évoluent et que les responsables des politiques considèrent plus sérieusement la religion, c'est en raison de certains phénomènes ou événements récents, tels que :

- des membres de communautés religieuses minoritaires ont demandé la reconnaissance et des accommodements à l'égard de besoins spécifiques auprès d'institutions publiques et privées;
- la persistance de l'intolérance religieuse et de la discrimination au sein de la société canadienne (par exemple, la religion arrive au 2^e rang des motifs de crime haineux (après la race); et
- des conflits entre groupes religieux au Canada prennent racine à l'étranger.

Pourant, ces approches semblent bien adaptées au contexte canadien, notamment en regard de l'engagement du pays envers la diversité culturelle en général et de l'absence de séparation formelle « à l'américaine » entre l'Église et l'État, ou, comme en France, de système de sécularité publique ou *laïcisme* (Seljak, 2008). En conséquence, les responsables canadiens des politiques devraient envisager la pertinence de rassembler les principaux intervenants sur ces questions pour financer la création d'un conseil interconfessionnel canadien basé sur le modèle de ceux qui ont vu le jour dans différents pays comme l'Australie.

Les responsables

Si d'autres pays occidentaux où l'on trouve d'importantes minorités religieuses (p. ex., le Royaume-Uni, l'Australie et les États-Unis, en plus du Canada) semblent mieux accepter les différences religieuses, leurs approches respectives présentent des différences notables. Par exemple, le Canada se situe loin derrière le Royaume-Uni et l'Australie, deux pays dont le gouvernement finance des conseils afin qu'ils puissent promouvoir la coopération interconfessionnelle et l'éducation, de même qu'offrir des conseils sur les questions religieuses aux gouvernements et à leurs agences et institutions.

- traduisent par une polarisation, une ghettoisation et une radicalisation de certaines communautés religieuses – une situation qui prévaudrait actuellement dans beaucoup de pays européens.
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- soutenir dans leur intégration à la société canadienne les membres des communautés d'immigrants qui affichent une identité religieuse forte en favorisant les structures et les pratiques religieuses qui encouragent l'intégration;
- négocier les conflits qui existent dans les communautés religieuses et entre les adeptes d'une même religion;
- promouvoir la coopération et une meilleure compréhension entre les différents groupes religieux;
- faciliter une communication et une coopération continues entre les ministères gouvernementaux, les institutions publiques et les communautés religieuses;
- promouvoir la coopération et une meilleure compréhension entre les différents groupes religieux;
- soutenir financièrement différentes formes de sensibilisation du public sur des questions de diversité religieuse, de tolérance et de liberté d'expression, et soit controversés et potentiellement dangereux. Elle soulignait, de plus, que le gouvernement ne semblait pas très informé sur la question.
- combattre l'extrémisme religieux sous toutes ses formes (Seljak, 2008, p. 69-72).

La religion et le multiculturalisme

Ce conseil interconfessionnel s'intégrerait bien au modèle de multiculturalisme canadien, puisqu'il viendrait ajouter à des structures et des pratiques déjà existantes tout en conservant la flexibilité permettant de s'adapter à l'évolution de la démographie religieuse. Cet article analyse l'importance accordée à l'identité religieuse et au dialogue interconfessionnel dans l'avancement du multiculturalisme au Canada ainsi qu'aux façons de soutenir ce dialogue.

Il y a à peine 10 ans, il était pratiquement impossible d'amorcer un débat public sur le rôle de la religion dans la société canadienne et dans les objectifs des politiques et pratiques du multiculturalisme. Peu d'études étaient financées par le gouvernement fédéral et toute tentative de mettre cette question à l'ordre du jour du gouvernement restait lettre morte en raison de la politique canadienne de séparation entre l'Église et l'État. Qui plus est, la question religieuse était rarement abordée lors de conférences sur l'immigration et le multiculturalisme. Il y a quelques années, à l'occasion de la conférence nationale de Métropolis, une haute responsable de Patrimoine canadien disait qu'elle aurait aimé aborder ce sujet, mais que les décideurs publics craignaient que de souligner la question religieuse provoque des dissensions, et soit controversé et potentiellement dangereux. Elle soulignait, de plus, que le gouvernement ne semblait pas très informé sur la question.

L'ignorance et la peur ne sont pas de bons moteurs de politiques publiques. Quoi qu'il en soit, les événements récents ont forcé un changement d'attitude – la Commission de consultation sur les

Le théologien de renommée internationale Hans Küng a prononcé cette phrase célèbre : « Pas de paix entre les nations sans paix entre les religions. Pas de paix entre les religions sans dialogue entre les religions » (Küng, 2005) [traduction libre].

Si les propos de Küng portaient sur les conflits internationaux, cette maxime garde toute sa pertinence dans le contexte des communautés ethnoreligieuses du Canada.

Bien qu'il se déroule de manière plus ou moins formelle au sein des institutions canadiennes, le dialogue interconfessionnel n'a jamais constitué une priorité en matière de politiques publiques pour le gouvernement du Canada, surtout si l'on en juge par les politiques officielles et les pratiques touchant le multiculturalisme. Comme le dialogue interconfessionnel vise à favoriser le respect des

Le dialogue interconfessionnel au Canada¹

multiculturel.

différences, accroître la coopération et surmonter les conflits, il est surprenant que ce dialogue n'ait pas retenu l'attention des partisans d'un Canada plus

Une telle attitude peut provoquer l'éloignement de certains membres de communautés ethnoreligieuses de la société en général, et les décideurs publics commencent à prendre conscience que de sous-estimer l'importance, pour beaucoup de Canadiens, des formes d'identité religieuse peut engendrer des incompréhensions et des injustices qui se

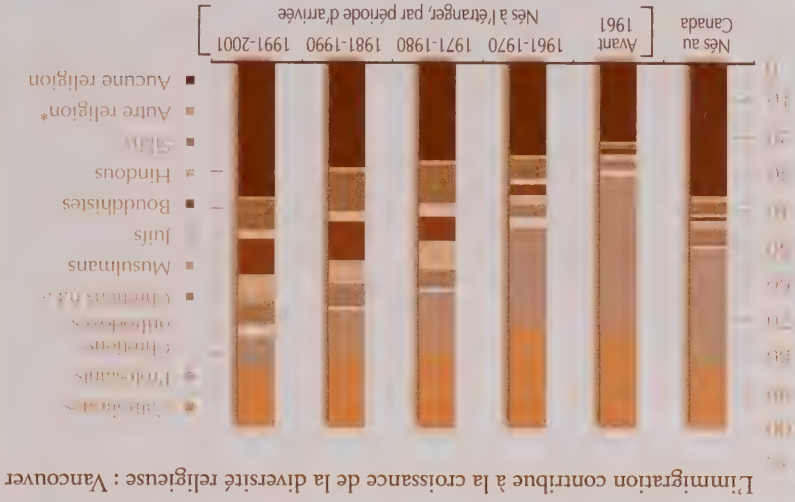
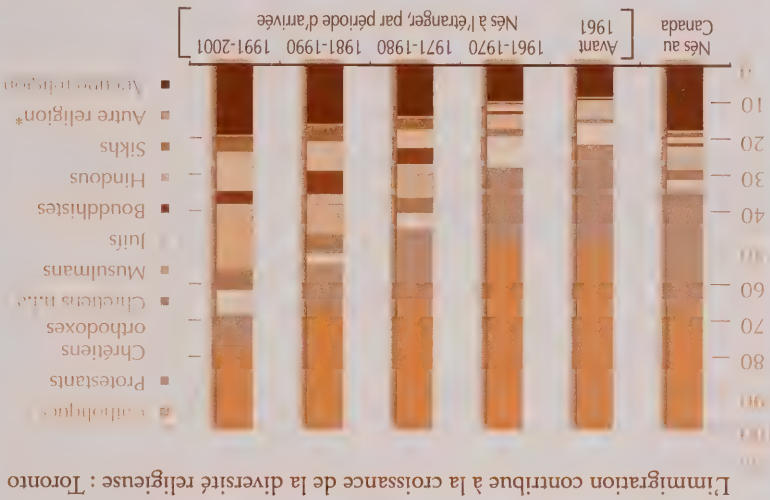
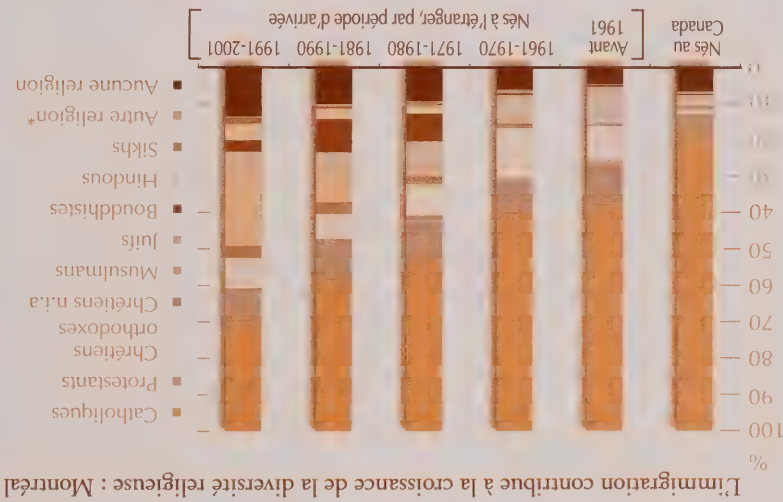
Les partisans du multiculturalisme — c'est-à-dire ceux qui veulent faire du Canada une société plus diversifiée, plus participative et plus juste — devraient porter attention à la religion, un sujet d'importance pour les Canadiens. De récentes études révèlent, dans de nombreux cas, un lien étroit entre identité religieuse et identité ethnique. Un lien si étroit, en fait, que les membres de ces communautés ne peuvent déterminer avec précision où se termine l'ethnicité et où commence la religion². Il apparaît dès lors difficile pour quiconque d'affirmer reconnaître et respecter l'identité spécifique d'une communauté ethnique si cette personne n'accepte pas les aspects religieux que les membres de la communauté perçoivent comme étant au cœur de leur identité.

- 1 Une étude à la base de cet article a été réalisée dans le cadre d'un contrat de recherche pour le compte de la Direction générale des politiques stratégiques et de la recherche, Programme Multiculturalisme et droits de la personne, ministère du Patrimoine canadien. Les opinions exprimées dans cet article sont celles de l'auteur.
- 2 Sur la relation étroite entre la religion et l'ethnicité dans la société canadienne, voir Paul Bramadat et David Seljak (dir.), 2005 et 2008.

Lorsque le statut, le traitement et les comportements d'un groupe minoritaire deviennent sensibles politiquement – comme c'est le cas des musulmans aujourd'hui – des études quantitatives soutenues sur les attitudes et les résultats (tels que les taux d'emploi, les efforts déployés sur le plan de la participation sociale et politique et les expériences de discrimination) peuvent contribuer à rectifier le portrait sensationnaliste brossé par certains médias d'information.

Environics prévoit mettre à jour cette enquête importante en 2009 ou en 2010. ●

L'immigration contribue à la croissance de la diversité religieuse



Source : Statistique Canada, Recensement de la population, Beyond 20/20 Professional Browser 97F0022xCb01004.IVT

menée au pays par des musulmans du Canada dans un avenir rapproché. En contrepartie, un musulman sur dix environ croit qu'une telle attaque est très (3 %) ou assez (8 %) probable.

La population en général considère beaucoup plus probable une attaque terroriste perpétrée par un musulman canadien. Une majorité de Canadiens pense une telle attaque très (19 %) ou assez (40 %) probable alors qu'une minorité pense qu'une telle attaque est peu (26 %) ou pas du tout (11 %) probable.

Si les résultats de cette enquête d'Environics sur les musulmans canadiens, de même que celle menée auprès de la population canadienne en général sur la participation des musulmans à la vie canadienne, révèlent certaines inquiétudes et incompréhensions, ils mettent également en lumière une solide base de bonne volonté entre les Canadiens musulmans et non musulmans.

Les musulmans canadiens se sentent fortement responsables d'être vigilants à l'égard des extrémistes au sein de leur communauté. La grande majorité des musulmans du Canada croient que le musulman moyen, respectueux des lois, a la responsabilité de dénoncer des extrémismes potentiellement violents qu'il peut rencontrer dans une mosquée ou au sein de sa communauté. Sept musulmans canadiens sur dix (72 %) affirment que le musulman canadien ordinaire a une grande responsabilité de dénoncer des extrémistes potentiellement violents s'il en rencontre. Quinze pour cent de plus affirment que le musulman ordinaire et respectueux des lois a une certaine responsabilité à cet égard et seulement 6 % d'entre eux ne se

sentent pas tenus de signaler des extrémistes qu'ils croient susceptibles de poser des actes violents au nom de l'islam.

Les trois quarts (75 %) des musulmans canadiens affirment avoir entendu parler de l'arrestation en 2006 de 18 adolescents et hommes musulmans de la région du Grand Toronto accusés de planifier des attentats terroristes. Parmi les musulmans affirmant être au courant de ces arrestations, les trois quarts (73 %) affirment que les attaques, si elles avaient eu lieu, auraient été sans fondements. Treize pour cent du sous-échantillon de 75 % (ceux qui affirment avoir eu connaissance des arrestations de 2006) affirment que ces attaques auraient été totalement (5 %) ou partiellement (8 %) justifiées. En résumé, 13 % de ce sous-échantillon affirment que les attaques auraient été au moins partiellement justifiées, ce qui représente un peu moins de 10 % de l'ensemble de l'échantillon.

Lorsqu'on leur demande s'ils éprouvent de la sympathie à l'égard des sentiments et motifs de ceux qui voulaient prétendument perpétrer ces attaques, huit musulmans canadiens sur dix (82 %) affirment n'avoir aucune sympathie alors que 9 % expriment une certaine sympathie envers les jeunes hommes et 2 % ont des sentiments partagés.

Conclusion

Seuls 3 % des répondants musulmans croient que la plupart (2 %) ou plusieurs (1 %) de leurs coreligionnaires soutiennent les groupes extrémistes tel que Al-Qaïda. Huit musulmans canadiens sur dix croient que seulement certains (11 %) ou aucun (11 %) musulman au Canada ne soutient les groupes extrémistes. Par ailleurs, 15 % des musulmans canadiens affirment ne pas savoir combien de musulmans au pays soutiennent ces organisations.

Les musulmans sont moins portés que la population en général à croire que les musulmans canadiens puissent soutenir les groupes extrémistes. Cela dit, parmi l'ensemble des Canadiens, 13 % seulement croient que la plupart (5 %) des musulmans canadiens ou plusieurs d'entre eux (8 %) soutiennent Al-Qaïda ou d'autres organisations similaires. La plupart des Canadiens croient en fait que seulement quelques musulmans au pays (26 %) ou très peu d'entre eux (51 %) soutiennent de tels groupes.

Si les résultats de cette enquête d'Environics sur les musulmans canadiens, de même que celle menée auprès de la population canadienne en général sur la participation des musulmans à la vie canadienne, révèlent certaines inquiétudes et incompréhensions, ils mettent également en lumière une solide base de bonne volonté entre les Canadiens musulmans et non musulmans. Les études menées par Environics démontrent que, par leur optimisme, leurs aspirations et leur fierté d'appartenance à leur groupe et à la société canadienne, les musulmans du Canada ont beaucoup en commun avec d'autres groupes d'immigrants d'hier et d'aujourd'hui au pays.

tion moindre mais tout de même significative de musulmans se disent assez ou très préoccupés par l'extrémisme parmi les musulmans canadiens (53 %), par l'influence de la musique, des films et de la télévision sur les jeunes musulmans du pays (49 %) de même que par la baisse de l'importance accordée à la religion par les musulmans canadiens (48 %). Les musulmans canadiens disent moins préoccupés par le fait que les femmes jouent un rôle moderne dans la société (26 %).

L'extrémisme et le terrorisme

Une très faible proportion de musulmans canadiens appuie les extrémistes qui se réclament de l'islam et très peu soutiennent leurs activités. Une vaste majorité des musulmans canadiens vivant au Canada estime très peu probable une attaque terroriste perpétrée par des Canadiens musulmans et une large majorité affirme qu'il serait impé-rieux pour eux de dénoncer des extré-mistes potentiellement violents au sein de leur communauté.

Quatre musulmans canadiens sur dix (40 %) croient qu'il existe au pays une lutte opposant les musulmans modérés et extrémistes. Parmi ceux qui perçoivent une lutte, 80 % s'identifient personnellement avec les modérés alors que 14 % s'identifient avec les extrémistes, bien qu'on ne puisse présumer que la plupart (ou même simplement beaucoup) d'entre eux seraient susceptibles de poser certains actes, et encore moins des actes violents. La population en général (56 %) est relativement plus susceptible que les musulmans eux-mêmes de percevoir un conflit entre les extrémistes et les modérés au sein de la communauté musulmane.

Huit musulmans canadiens sur dix croient peu (21 %) ou pas du tout probable (60 %) une attaque terroriste



Les musulmans canadiens et la population en général sont les moins susceptibles de percevoir des manifestations d'hostilité envers les musulmans dans leur pays

Croient qu'un grand nombre ou la plupart des Canadiens/Européens manifestent de l'hostilité à l'égard des musulmans (%)



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Une autre divergence d'opinions, bien que moins prononcée, porte sur la question de l'interdiction du port du foulard de tête dans les lieux publics, une mesure adoptée notamment dans les écoles publiques françaises. Une grande majorité de musulmans canadiens (86 %) désapprouve cette initiative et seulement 9 % se montrent favorables.

Si, à l'image des musulmans canadiens, une majorité de Canadiens (55 %) désapprouve l'interdiction du port du foulard de tête, plus d'un tiers (36 %) y souscrit. Cette opposition exprimée par les Canadiens rejoint les sentiments des Américains (57 %) et des Britanniques (62 %), qui s'opposent aussi à cette interdiction. En comparaison, une majorité de répondants de l'Allemagne (54 %) et de la France (78 %) appuie cette interdiction. Les répondants espagnols sont partagés sur la question (48 %) s'opposent à l'interdiction et 43 % y sont favorables).

témoins d'une forme de religiosité délaissée par la société québécoise il y a à peine quelques décennies.

La vie au Canada

Les musulmans canadiens se disent satisfaits de la vie au Canada, affirmant que la situation des musulmans est meilleure au Canada que dans d'autres pays occidentaux et que les femmes musulmanes ont une meilleure qualité de vie au pays que dans la plupart des pays musulmans. Cependant, près du tiers des musulmans canadiens affirment avoir vécu au cours des deux dernières années une expérience négative liée à leur race, leur ethnicité ou leur appartenance religieuse. De plus, une majorité d'entre eux se disent préoccupés par le chômage général du pays est plus élevé que la

Au Canada, le taux de satisfaction des musulmans à l'égard de l'orientation sexuelle est plus élevé que la moyenne nationale. Plus de huit musulmans sur dix (81 %), comparativement à six répondants sur dix issus de la population en général (61 %), se disent généralement satisfaits de la façon dont les choses se passent au pays aujourd'hui. En réponse à cette question, les musulmans canadiens expriment une plus grande satisfaction que les musulmans en France, en Allemagne, en Espagne ou au Royaume-Uni.

Les trois quarts des musulmans canadiens croient que les musulmans sont mieux traités au Canada que dans d'autres pays occidentaux et 17 % croient qu'ils sont traités de manière semblable. À peine 3 % des musulmans canadiens croient que leurs coreligionnaires sont moins bien traités au Canada qu'ailleurs en Occident.

Si sept Canadiens sur dix (70 %) croient que les femmes musulmanes jouissent d'une meilleure qualité de vie au Canada

Selon les résultats de l'enquête, l'attitude favorable des Canadiens musulmans à l'endroit du renforcement identitaire des musulmans s'explique par

leur conviction que les valeurs pronées par cette religion sont positives et que le Canada va profiter de l'affirmation de ces valeurs. Le reste de la population, en revanche, se montre réticent principalement en raison de l'inquétude liée à l'extrémisme religieux.

Les Canadiens sont plus susceptibles que les citoyens français, allemands ou britanniques de sous-estimer la volonté des musulmans de leur pays à s'intégrer au sein de la société en général.

de leur identité canadienne rejoint la moyenne nationale. Lorsqu'on leur demande s'ils se considèrent d'abord musulmans ou Canadiens, 56 % des musulmans canadiens choisissent l'appartenance religieuse et 23 % se disent Canadiens d'abord. Fait intéressant, 17 % des musulmans canadiens ont spontanément répondu que ces deux identités étaient pour eux d'égale importance (cette réponse n'était pas présentée comme un choix possible afin de préserver la comparabilité des résultats avec les deux enquêtes d'opinion Few menées en Europe. Cela dit, en raison de la popularité de cette réponse, le questionnaire sera modifié en vue des prochaines études dans le contexte canadien).

Sur cette question, on remarque des différences importantes entre les générations. En effet, les musulmans âgés de 18 à 29 ans sont proportionnellement plus nombreux que la moyenne (77 %) à se réclamer d'abord de l'identité musulmane. Parmi les répondants de la plus jeune cohorte, 14 % ont affirmé être d'abord canadiens et 8 % affirment que

les deux identités sont d'égale importance. La question de l'identité chez les jeunes est importante même si elle est peu abordée dans cette étude. Bien

qu'elle sorte du cadre de cette étude, une question de mérite d'avantage de recherche : l'importance relative de la religion musulmane dans le sentiment identitaire des jeunes musulmans canadiens révèle-t-elle une fierté de l'islam (ce qui serait positif, aux yeux de John Berry de l'université Queens) ou est-elle le signe d'une aliénation par rapport à la société canadienne dans son ensemble résultant d'un phénomène de discrimination et d'exclusion (une thèse soutenue par Jeffrey Reitz et Rupa Banerjee de l'Université de Toronto).

Bien qu'une majorité de musulmans canadiens se disent d'abord musulmans, presque tous (94 %) affirment leur fierté d'être Canadiens, une proportion semblable à celles des répondants de la population en général, qui affirment à 93 % être fiers d'être Canadiens. Une proportion semblable de musulmans canadiens (73 %) et de répondants de la population en général (74 %) affirment être très fiers d'être Canadiens.

Si les musulmans croient que leurs coreligionnaires veulent s'intégrer à la société canadienne, la population en général pense plutôt qu'ils désirent rester en marge de la société.

Lorsqu'on leur demande s'ils croient que les musulmans veulent « adopter les coutumes et le mode de vie canadiens ou s'ils veulent être distincts de la société au sens large », une faible majorité (55 %) des musulmans croient que les musulmans veulent adopter le mode de vie

canadien. Par ailleurs, 13 % répondent que leurs coreligionnaires veulent adopter les coutumes canadiennes tout en demeurant distincts en tant que musulmans. À peine un quart des musulmans canadiens (23 %) croient que leurs coreligionnaires souhaitent demeurer distincts.

Au sein de la population en général, ces proportions sont inversées. Un quart de tous les Canadiens (25 %) croit qu'une majorité de musulmans veulent adopter des habitudes de vie canadiennes et une majorité (57 %) affirme que les musulmans veulent demeurer distincts. Enfin, 7 % de la population en général croit que les musulmans canadiens désirent à la fois s'intégrer et demeurer distincts. Après l'Espagne, le Canada est le deuxième pays présentant les divergences d'opinions les plus fortes entre la communauté musulmane et la population en général sur ce point. Autrement dit, les Canadiens sont plus susceptibles que les citoyens français, allemands ou britanniques de sous-estimer la volonté des musulmans de leur pays à s'intégrer au sein de la société en général.

Les opinions des musulmans et de la population en général divergent notamment sur la question de la reconnaissance de la charia et sur l'interdiction du port du foulard de tête dans les institutions publiques. Si un peu plus de la moitié (53 %) des musulmans canadiens souhaitent que la charia soit reconnue par le gouvernement canadien comme étant des principes juridiques à partir desquels régler des différends familiaux, un tiers (34 %) est d'avis contraire. En comparaison, près de huit Canadiens sur dix (79 %) parmi la population en général affirment que le gouvernement canadien ne devrait pas reconnaître la charia alors que seuls 11 % sont favorables à une telle reconnaissance.

musulmans dans les lieux publics (bien qu'une minorité seulement des Canadiens soit favorable à une telle mesure).

Les perceptions générales face à l'islam et aux musulmans

Lorsqu'on leur demande si la perception des Canadiens à l'égard de l'islam est généralement positive ou négative, les répondants musulmans sont partagés. Si la moitié des musulmans canadiens (50 %) pensent que la perception des Canadiens envers l'islam est positive, environ quatre sur dix (39 %) croient que les Canadiens ont une perception négative de l'islam et 7 % croient que les Canadiens n'ont une perception ni positive ni négative de la religion musulmane.

Fait intéressant, la perception exprimée par les Canadiens à l'égard de l'islam correspond de très près à celle des musulmans. Environ la moitié des Canadiens (49 %) perçoit l'islam de manière générale positive, alors qu'un répondant sur quatre (38 %) affirme percevoir cette religion de manière négative. Enfin, 8 % ne se disent ni favorables ni défavorables à l'islam.

Ces résultats sont pratiquement identiques à ceux de l'enquête omnibus Focus Canada réalisée au premier trimestre de 2004. Par ailleurs, des contacts personnels plus fréquents entre des Canadiens et des musulmans favorisent une meilleure perception de cette minorité par les Canadiens : 70 % des répondants affirmant côtoyer fréquemment des musulmans ont une perception positive de l'islam. En comparaison, seulement 36 % de ceux qui n'ont que rarement ou jamais de contacts avec les musulmans affirment avoir une opinion favorable de l'islam.

La plupart des musulmans du Canada ne perçoivent pas les autres Canadiens comme étant hostiles à l'égard de leurs coreligionnaires. D'après les résultats de l'enquête, 16 % des

musulmans canadiens affirment que la majorité des Canadiens (5 %) ou plusieurs d'entre eux (11 %) manifestent de l'hostilité alors qu'une majorité d'entre eux croit que seulement quelques Canadiens (39 %) ou très peu de Canadiens (36 %) manifestent de l'hostilité à l'égard des musulmans.

Lorsqu'on pose cette même question à la population en général, la proportion de répondants percevant un sentiment d'hostilité envers les musulmans est plus importante. Environ trois Canadiens sur dix croient que la plupart des Canadiens (7 %) ou plusieurs d'entre eux (21 %) manifestent de l'hostilité envers les musulmans. Enfin, 44 % croient que quelques Canadiens manifestent de l'hostilité, et un quart (24 %) croit que très peu de Canadiens font preuve d'hostilité face aux adeptes de l'islam.

Les musulmans canadiens ressentent moins d'hostilité à leur égard que les musulmans du Royaume-Uni, de la France, de l'Espagne ou de l'Allemagne. Si 17 % des musulmans canadiens croient que la plupart ou qu'un grand nombre de Canadiens manifestent de l'hostilité à l'égard des musulmans, la proportion des musulmans percevant un sentiment hostile de la plupart ou d'un grand nombre de leurs compatriotes est beaucoup plus élevée en Allemagne (51 %), au Royaume-Uni (42 %), en France (39 %) ou en Espagne (31 %).

L'intégration et les questions identitaires

Si les musulmans et la population en général perçoivent tous deux un renforcement de l'identité islamique chez les musulmans canadiens, ils ne voient pas d'un même oeil l'impact de ce renforcement sur la plupart des musulmans canadiens croient que, dans l'ensemble, les musulmans canadiens ont un sentiment d'identité musulmane très fort (30 %) ou assez fort (42 %). Cette perception est partagée par la population en général, où une majorité de Canadiens croit que les musulmans canadiens ont un sentiment d'identité musulmane très fort (27 %) ou assez fort (44 %).

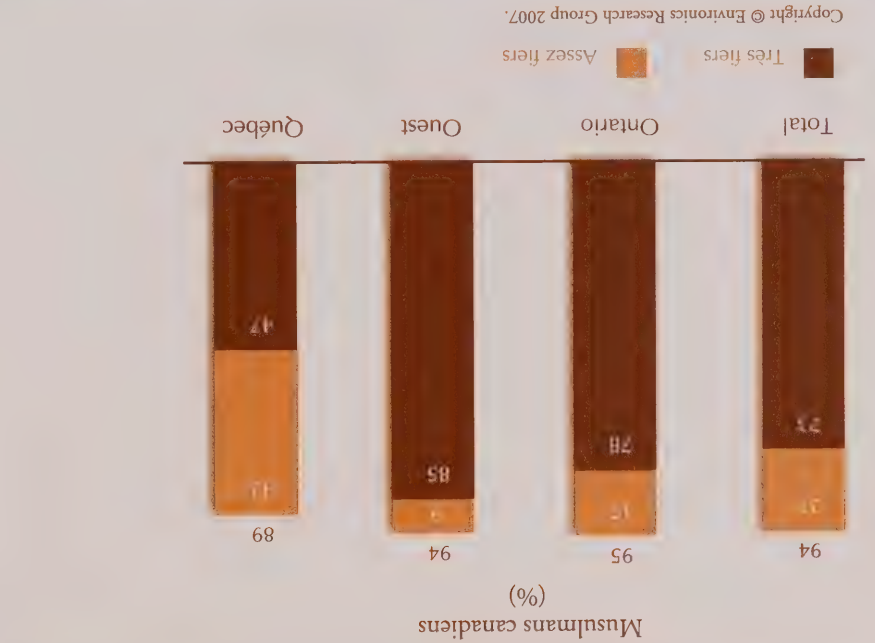
Les musulmans canadiens et la population en général perçoivent une montée du sentiment identitaire islamique au Canada : 69 % des musulmans canadiens et 62 % de la population en général croient à une augmentation du sentiment de l'identité islamique au pays. Cependant, les musulmans canadiens diffèrent de la population en général en ce qu'ils considèrent que ce sentiment croissant de l'identité islamique est une bonne chose pour le Canada. Cela dit, si 85 % des musulmans canadiens y voient une bonne chose, cette opinion n'est partagée que par un tiers (33 %) de la population en général. Par ailleurs, alors que 9 % des musulmans canadiens croient que cette montée du sentiment identitaire islamique pour le Canada, cette opinion n'est partagée que par un tiers (33 %) de la population en général. Par ailleurs, alors que 9 % des musulmans canadiens croient que cette montée du sentiment identitaire islamique pour le Canada, cette opinion n'est partagée que par un tiers (33 %) de la population en général.

Les musulmans sont fiers d'être Canadiens, un peu moins au Québec

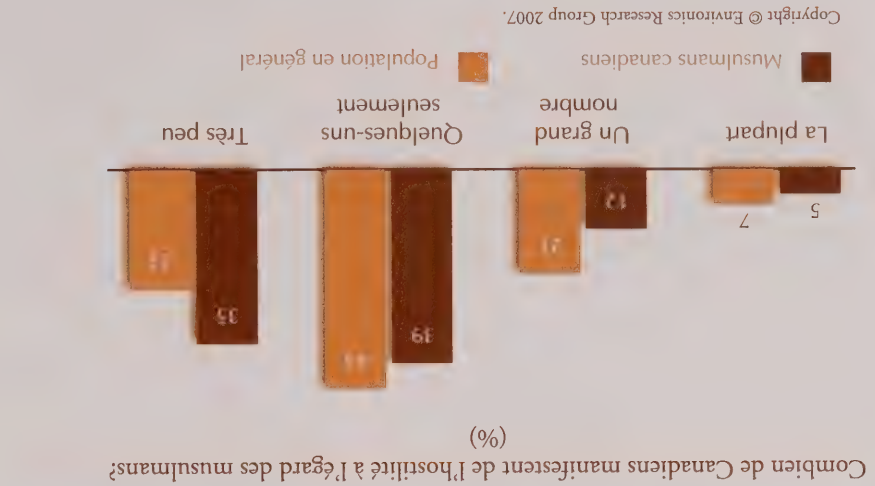
30 novembre 2006 au 5 janvier 2007 et les entretiens se sont déroulés en anglais, en français, en arabe et en ourdou. La comparaison de ces résultats avec les données du recensement démontre que l'échantillon est représentatif de la population musulmane canadienne totale au plan des caractéristiques démographiques et de la répartition régionale. L'enquête auprès de la population en général s'est déroulée du 8 au 30 décembre 2006 et les entretiens ont été menés en anglais et en français.

Les résultats de ce sondage révèlent un portrait plutôt positif de l'intégration des immigrants musulmans (environ neuf musulmans canadiens sur dix sont nés à l'étranger) dans la société canadienne. Les musulmans canadiens affirment être à la fois fiers du Canada et de l'Islam, disent vouloir adhérer aux normes canadiennes tout en contribuant à les définir et condamnant l'extrémisme qui est parfois présente comme monnaie courante dans d'autres pays où vivent de nombreux musulmans. Bien qu'ils se disent préoccupés par la discrimination et le sous-emploi, les musulmans canadiens ont une attitude bienveillante à l'égard du Canada et représentent, parmi les répondants de tous les pays occidentaux sondés, la minorité musulmane la moins susceptible de percevoir la majorité de leurs concitoyens comme étant hostiles envers l'Islam.

Si les Canadiens en général ont une perception modérément positive de l'Islam, ils sont proportionnellement moins nombreux que les musulmans à affirmer que cette minorité désire s'intégrer pleinement dans la société canadienne en général, ce qui explique peut-être pour quoi la population en général est plus favorable que la minorité musulmane à l'introduction de certaines mesures visant une adaptation forcée, telle qu'une interdiction du port de foulards de tête



Les musulmans et la population en général ne croient pas que les Canadiens manifestent de l'hostilité à l'égard des musulmans



Michael Adams

Environics Research Group

Les musulmans au Canada : Les résultats de l'enquête 2007 d'Environics

Même dans les pays tradition-
nellement ouverts à l'immigra-
tion de masses, certains
groupes d'immigrants attirent parfois
l'attention. Aux 19^e et 20^e siècles, les
immigrants au pays provenaient presque
exclusivement de pays chrétiens euro-
péens. Cependant, de profondes dissen-
sions religieuses parmi les chrétiens
amenaient des immigrants catholiques
de l'Irlande, de la Pologne et du sud de
l'Europe à immigrer parmi les catho-
liques francophones vivant au Canada,
soulignant des craintes parmi l'élite pro-
testante anglophone qui s'inquiétait de
leur capacité à s'intégrer. En raison de
leurs liens avec le Vatican susceptibles,
aux yeux de plusieurs, d'affaiblir leur
allégeance nationaliste et en raison de
leur volonté d'établir un système sco-
laire distinct qui continuerait d'incul-
quer le catholicisme à la nouvelle

génération, les catholiques était perçus
comme un sous-groupe social risquant
de ne jamais réussir son intégration dans
la société canadienne. L'arrivée d'un

Les résultats présentés ici proviennent
d'entrevues téléphoniques menés auprès
de 500 musulmans canadiens et de
2000 répondants de la population cana-
dienne en général. L'enquête auprès
des musulmans s'est déroulée du

nombre important de chrétiens ortho-
doxes en provenance de l'Europe de l'Est
souleva des inquiétudes similaires.
Aujourd'hui, comme les catholiques et
les chrétiens orthodoxes sont solidement
implantés au cœur de la vie canadienne,
ce sont les musulmans canadiens qui
font maintenant l'objet d'une attention
particulière¹. Avec en toile de fond des
préoccupations à l'égard du terrorisme
issu du mouvement islamiste militant et
quelques disputes à propos de vêtements
musulmans (surtout les *hidjabs* et les
niqabs), certains observateurs canadiens
ont exprimé des doutes quant à la
volonté des immigrants musulmans de
s'adapter aux normes libérales séculaires
du Canada.

À la fin de 2006 et au début de 2007,
Environics Research Group a sondé les
attitudes des musulmans canadiens
envers le Canada et le désir de cette

communauté religieuse minoritaire de
participer pleinement à la société cana-
dienne. Cette enquête, inspirée en
grande partie de l'étude Rew Global
Attitudes menée parallèlement en
France, en Espagne, en Allemagne et au
Royaume-Uni utilise un échantillon
élargi de répondants musulmans (au
Canada, cet échantillon compte 500
musulmans) de même qu'un échantillon
de la population en général visant à
mesurer les attitudes du public envers
cette minorité.

1 D'autres minorités religieuses, en particulier les sikhs, ont également fait l'objet d'une attention
particulière à plusieurs occasions au cours des dernières décennies. L'attention soutenue dont fait
l'objet la minorité musulmane au pays et l'inquiétude exprimée à son endroit résulte notamment
d'une série d'incidents sur la scène internationale, incluant les attentats du 11 septembre, les
attaques à la bombe sur le métro londonien et plusieurs conflits liés à la culture dans des pays
européens (telle que la colère des musulmans face aux représentations du prophète Mahomet
par un caricaturiste danois).

évangélique et pentecôtiste est faire abstraction d'un élément clé de l'équation (Jenkins, 2007).

La propagation du christianisme dans le monde entier éloigne son pôle d'attraction des pays industrialisés vers ceux en voie de développement. En 2050, la majorité des chrétiens du monde seront non blancs et vivront à l'extérieur des pays de l'Ouest dans les ex-colonies et ne seront plus issus des pays colonisateurs. Ils endosseront diverses formes de christianisme plus émotives et plus charismatiques que celles des pays de l'Ouest (qu'une récente étude du Pew Forum distingue du conservatisme politique). Par surcroît, nombre de ces chrétiens constitueront des minorités dans des régimes non chrétiens souvent hostiles. Le glissement démographique des communautés chrétiennes vers le Sud mondial, l'évolution des théologies du renouveau religieux de l'islam et du christianisme, et l'accroissement des populations musulmanes et chrétiennes feront de la diversité religieuse et du dialogue inter-religieux de ces sociétés, notamment entre les musulmans et les chrétiens et en matière politique entourant les libertés religieuses, des questions de plus en plus fondamentales dans les relations internationales à l'aube de ce 21^e siècle. ●

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TABLEAU 2 Répartition des pentecôtistes par pays

Rang	Pays	Nombre	% de la population
1	Chine	72,0 millions	5,6
2	Etats-Unis	20,2 millions	7,0
3	Brésil	15,0 millions	9,0
4	Nigéria	13,0 millions	11,0
5	Philippines	9,0 millions	12,0
6	Indonésie	7,0 millions	3,0
7	Inde	5,2 millions	0,5

Source : Operation World (2000); World Christian Database (s.d.); Fonds des Nations Unies pour la population (2001).

et remodele le visage du christianisme mondial. La *World Christian Database* estime que le monde peut compter jusqu'à 250 millions de pentecôtistes : soit un huitième des 2 milliards de chrétiens du monde entier et 1 personne sur 25 pour toute la population planétaire (Martin, 2002).

Comme le montrent les tableaux 1 et 2, trois des pays qui comptent les plus importantes populations musulmanes (l'Inde, l'Indonésie et le Nigéria) ont également d'importantes communautés de chrétiens pentecôtistes et certaines autres minorités chrétiennes appréciables.

La majorité des Indiens sont hindous (80,5 %), mais cette dominance cache de grandes diversités religieuses entre les Etats indiens. Les musulmans constituent la majorité de la population dans le Lakshadweep (95 %) et dans le Jammu et Cachemire (67 %). Par contre, les chrétiens sont majoritaires dans les petits Etats de l'Est du Nagaland (90 %), du Mizoram (87 %) et du Meghalaya (70 %) et constituent d'importantes minorités dans deux Etats du Sud, le Kerala (19 %) et le Tamil Nadu (6 %). Le Pendjab est principalement occupé par les sikhs à 59,9 % (Pew, s.d.). Les tensions qui règnent depuis longtemps en Inde, notamment dans les relations entre les castes, ont également une dimension inter-religieuse : c'est notamment le cas du mouvement pour les droits des dalits (ces « Intouchables » qui sont entre 150 et 250 millions en Inde) parmi lesquels il existe depuis longtemps un courant de conversions vers l'islam, vers le bouddhisme et, de plus en plus au cours des dernières décennies, vers le christianisme. Ces conversions soulèvent la colère des nationalistes hindous et nourrissent toujours des tensions entre chrétiens et hindous (Jenkins, 2007 : 214-217).

En Indonésie et au Nigéria, les diversités ethniques sont susceptibles d'exacerber les conflits religieux. L'Indonésie,

Conclusions

Pourant plus important pays musulman au monde, compte malgré tout une minorité chrétienne notable de 23 millions de fidèles, soit environ 10 % de la population. Les tensions inter-religieuses sont dues au fait que les différentes confessions se polarisent dans certaines groupes ethniques et certaines régions. Dans les villes, le christianisme est associé aux membres de la diaspora chinoise qui sont souvent des commerçants; ce fut d'ailleurs une source de tensions avivée par la récession à la fin des années 1990. Les régions à dominante chrétienne sont disséminées dans différentes îles d'Indonésie, dont le Timor, les Célèbes, Lombok et Maluku (les Moluques). Le Timor-Oriental, à prédominance catholique, a obtenu son indépendance de l'Indonésie au prix d'un dur combat de libération (auquel Oussama ben Laden s'est opposé).

Divers facteurs compromettent aujourd'hui les traditionnelles tolérances entre chrétiens et musulmans, entre hindous et chrétiens ainsi qu'entre musulmans et hindous dans nombre de grands pays du monde. Il s'agit entre autres du renouveau religieux de l'islam et du christianisme, avec la propagation de leurs doctrines et l'accroissement de leurs

adeptes, et du fait que l'ethnicité et la pauvreté (ou la réussite financière) coïncident souvent avec l'appartenance religieuse. Sans un dialogue inter-religieux accru et des approches plus réfléchies à l'égard de la théologie politique et de la religion et du développement, on risque de connaître dans les années à venir une plus grande instabilité politique et des flambées de violence inter-religieuse.

Ces développements risquent également d'avoir d'importantes incidences géopolitiques. Ainsi, comme le souligne Jenkins (2006 : 9, 2007 : 121), la Chine et d'autres Etats d'Asie de l'Est sont souvent perçus comme les balises du littoral Pacifique; mais si, avec la montée de l'influence des populations chrétiennes sur la culture et la société de ces pays, ce littoral du Pacifique était un jour perçu comme une ceinture chrétienne autour de l'Indonésie musulmane, dans quelle mesure cela risquera-t-il de modifier les perceptions sur la scène politique internationale et d'attiser les conflits dans les régions de l'Asie de l'Est et du Sud-Est? Les médias citent souvent l'islam comme la religion déterminante des pays en développement. Mais parler de la résurgence de l'islam en passant sous silence l'expansion du christianisme

TABLEAU 1
L'islam : Population musulmane par pays

Kang	Pays	Population musulmane	% de musulmans
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1	Indonésie	204 498 135	86,1
2	Pakistan	164 160 045	95,0
3	Inde	153 831 451	13,4
4	Bangladesh	127 443 924	83,0
5	Égypte	75 421 168	90,0
6	Nigéria	73 127 656	50,0
7	Turquie	71 749 022	99,8
8	Iran	64 557 719	98,0
9	Maroc	33 896 758	98,7
10	Algérie	33 431 971	99,0
11	Afghanistan	32 410 992	99,0
12	Soudan	28 152 919	70,0
13	Arabie saoudite	28 146 656	100,0
14	Iraq	27 374 544	97,0
15	Éthiopie	27 074 707	32,8

Source : CIA (2008).

Turquie, également parmi les 10 plus importants pays musulmans, est en Europe. Si l'Union européenne l'accepte comme membre, elle comptera alors l'un des plus grands pays musulmans au monde. Selon les projections actuelles, la population du Nigéria (pays dont la population est répartie presque à parts égales entre l'islam et le christianisme) sera, en 2050, supérieure à celle du Pakistan et du Bangladesh, de sorte qu'elle pourrait se hisser dans la liste des pays aux populations musulmanes les plus élevées. L'accroissement des populations musulmanes et chrétiennes du Nigéria et la confluence (surtout au nord du pays, où l'islam domine) des associations criminelles et des groupes islamistes radicaux soulèvent certaines préoccupations en rapport avec le terrorisme international. Oussama ben Laden demande depuis 2003 à ses adeptes de s'intéresser au Nigéria (IISS, 2006).

L'expansion à l'échelle mondiale du christianisme évangélique et pentecôtiste est de nos jours la plus grande explosion religieuse observée (Martin, 2008). Ce christianisme a d'ailleurs délogé les églises orthodoxes des pays de l'Est à titre de plus important regroupement du monde chrétien derrière le catholicisme. On a longtemps pensé que les mouvements chrétiens évangéliques et pentecôtistes étaient surtout privés et personnels (c.-à-d. que leur croissance ne s'opposait pas aux tendances perçues vers une plus grande sécularisation), et que leurs adeptes professaient des vues largement apolitiques. Le *Few Forum on Religion and Public Life* de 2006 a tout-à-fois conclu qu'une telle assertion doit être sérieusement remise en question : « L'essor que connaît le pentecôtisme en fera un mouvement de premier plan dans les paysages politiques et religieux du 21^e siècle. » Le pentecôtisme se répand rapidement dans le monde entier

Expansion et chevauchement à l'échelle mondiale de l'islam et du christianisme évangélique et pentecôtiste

La résurgence de l'islam et l'expansion du christianisme évangélique et pentecôtiste à l'échelle mondiale sont les phénomènes de la montée en flèche de la ferveur religieuse les plus marqués.

Cette résurgence mondiale de l'islam est une véritable renaissance dont l'étendue est supérieure à celle du fondamentalisme islamique (BBC, 2003; Kepel, 1994; Mahmood, 2005; White, 2002). On observe un retour visible à l'islam avec les tenues vestimentaires (le voile pour les femmes et une barbe pour les hommes), la prière et les rituels dans les pays du monde islamique. Une pierre d'assise de cette résurgence est le désir des gens pour un islam comme principe organisationnel à la fois de leur vie et de leur société, entraînant d'importants débats et de grandes controverses qui dégénèrent parfois en affrontements violents (par exemple, les émeutes et les politiques à propos des interprétations contestées de l'islam et de la sécularisation en Turquie en 2007) (Berger, 2006; Shakman Hurd, 2008).

L'islam est beaucoup plus vaste que le monde arabe. Il s'étend de l'Asie centrale et de l'Asie du Sud non arabes jusqu'aux pays de l'Asie du Sud-Est, dont l'Indonésie est le plus peuplé des pays musulmans (tableau 1). En fait, les 4 principaux pays musulmans (et 7 des 8 plus importants) ne sont pas des pays arabes et la plupart d'entre eux ne se trouvent pas au Moyen-Orient, ce qui appelle à la prudence quant à tout énoncé général sur l'islam en ce qui concerne les femmes, la démocratie et le terrorisme. L'Asie du Sud compte 3 des 4 pays musulmans les plus peuplés de la planète (le Pakistan, l'Inde et le Bangladesh) et l'Asie du Sud-Est en compte le quatrième (l'Indonésie). La

L'islam, il se peut fort bien que les défis posés par le christianisme mondial soient d'une importance aussi grande à long

terme.

En second lieu, la résurgence de la religion à la grandeur de la planète se manifeste également dans des pays présentant une diversité de traditions culturelles et religieuses, y compris les grandes religions autres que chrétiennes : le judaïsme, l'islam, l'hindouïsme et le bouddhisme. Par exemple, la montée du judaïsme orthodoxe, en Israël et aux États-Unis, a une incidence sur les politiques de l'un et l'autre pays (avec une diminution du poids démographique du judaïsme plus séculier et libéral, car les Juifs plus conservateurs ont plus d'enfants, il serait toutefois exagéré de prétendre que les Juifs d'avantage libéraux tendent à disparaître). Malgré leurs antécédents marxistes, la Chine et la Russie assistent également à une renaissance notable de la religion. Et, facteur sans doute encore plus important, on doit noter la nature dynamique et la répartition géographique (ainsi que le chevauchement) de la résurgence de l'islam et du christianisme dans certains pays parmi les plus peuplés du monde.

Montée du christianisme en Chine et en Asie de l'Est et du Sud-Est

Le christianisme connaît un véritable boom en Chine où vit le cinquième de la population mondiale. L'État encourage maintenant la pratique religieuse, si ce n'est que par souci de ses propres intérêts : le maintien de l'ordre social malgré un développement économique fulgurant (Lai, 2003; Kindopp et Hamrin, 2004). La Chine compte d'ailleurs des populations chrétiennes pentecôtistes et évangéliques parmi les plus importantes du monde. Le pentecôtisme domine également la montée du christianisme en

Corée du Sud, en Thaïlande et au Vietnam qui comptent tous d'importantes et ferventes minorités chrétiennes.

La question n'est pas de savoir si cette conversion à l'échelon national peut faire de la Chine un pays à dominante chrétienne : cela est invraisemblable. Mais on est en droit de se demander si le christianisme aura au cours des prochaines décennies le même niveau d'influence culturelle sur la vie des Chinois que celui qu'il a déjà en Corée du Sud. Quand on évaluera le rôle de la Chine au 21^e siècle dans les relations internationales, on devra prendre en considération l'influence que ce changement religieux pourrait y apporter sur le plan de la démocratie, des droits de la personne et de la politique étrangère (Aikman, 2006; Lampman, 2007; Pew, 2007).

Résurgence du christianisme orthodoxe en Russie

La Russie connaît aussi une véritable renaissance du christianisme orthodoxe après 70 années de répression, ce qui souligne la durabilité des identités religieuses, même dans une ère de mondialisation. L'unification récente des hiérarchies nationales et étrangères de

Les évangélistes endossent une série de croyances fondamentalistes : l'autorité et l'exhaustivité de la Bible – les Écritures primant sur la tradition, particulièrement celle de l'église catholique; l'unicité de la rédemption par la mort du Christ sur la croix; le salut par la foi et la grâce et non par les bonnes œuvres; la nécessité d'une conversion personnelle intérieure; et la nécessité, le bien-fondé et l'urgence de l'évangélisme.

Les pentecôtistes adhèrent à la même doctrine que les évangélistes, bien que leur pratique du christianisme soit plus émotive; ils croient que les chrétiens actuels peuvent être infus de cette même puissance du Saint-Esprit comme le furent les disciples dans le Nouveau Testament et ils sont portés à croire aux guérisons, aux miracles et au don de langues inconnus.

Source : McGrath (1993 : 183-184, 229-233 et 428-434).

L'église orthodoxe russe, legs de l'ère soviétique, et le rapprochement de l'église et de l'État, encouragée par le « pétro-populisme » ou « pétro-nationalisme », jettent les bases religieuses et gouvernementales d'un genre de politique identitaire orthodoxe, impliquant un rôle accru de la Russie et de son église orthodoxe sur la scène internationale. Pour le patriarche de Moscou, cette réunification est un pas important vers l'élargissement de sa sphère d'influence dans le monde entier, et l'État russe voit cette réunification de la grande société russe – c'est-à-dire les liens qui unissent la mère patrie à la diaspora (dont l'orthodoxie est le fondement spirituel) – comme un élément du retour de son influence sur la scène internationale (Daniel, 2006; Eggeert, 2007; Garrard et Garrard, 2008; Holley, 2007; Marsh, 2004; Miller Llana, 2007; Trumbull, 2007).

Cet article jette les bases d'un examen de l'évolution du rôle et de l'impact des identités religieuses dans les relations internationales (voir l'autre article de Thomas à la page 50). Il aborde la renaissance de la ferveur religieuse et les changements démographiques observables actuellement dans les deux plus importantes religions de la planète, l'islam et le christianisme, y compris leur impact dans certaines régions du monde.

Aspects politiques et démographiques de la résurgence des religions à l'échelle mondiale

L'actuelle résurgence de la religion qui se manifeste à l'échelle mondiale, tant dans la perception publique que dans la réalité, aura forcément une incidence sur les

Tendances mondiales de l'identité religieuse

politiques des gouvernements du monde entier, notamment sur leurs politiques étrangères.

Tout d'abord, la résurgence religieuse est mondiale sur le plan géographique; elle ne se limite pas à une région particulière du globe. Ce regain de ferveur religieuse est largement reconnu comme un phénomène clé dans le Sud de la planète. Il s'accompagne d'un glissement démographique massif généralisé des pays développés du Nord – de l'Europe, de l'Amérique du Nord et de l'ancienne

Union soviétique – vers les pays en voie de développement. Le Nord comptait 32 % de la population mondiale en 1900, 29 % en 1950, 25 % en 1970 et environ 18 % en 2000 et on estime qu'en 2050 ce pourcentage se situera entre 10 et 12 % seulement (Jenkins, 2007). Au 21^e siècle, l'Occident ou le Nord tend à bien des égards vers un post-christianisme, tandis que le christianisme devient de plus en plus post-Occident à la grande surprise du Sud (Samah, 2003). On doit prendre en compte ces changements pour bien comprendre l'évolution du paysage culturel et religieux qui entoure la politique mondiale, et l'impact qu'aura cette mutation culturelle et idéologique sur les relations internationales. Nous ne pouvons plus tenir pour acquis de façon plutôt chauvine que le christianisme en Europe ni même l'évangélisme anglo-saxon auront la même influence prépondérante sur l'avenir du christianisme mondial (Freston, 2001). Les érudits et les exégètes spécialistes des relations internationales juxtaposent souvent les termes tels que « Occident » et « monde islamique » croyant que l'Occident, à tout le moins sur le plan culturel, représente toujours le christianisme. En fait, le christianisme, sauf peut-être celui d'Amérique latine (qui en réalité regroupe tout un éventail de cultures à la fois indigènes et européennes), et des petites minorités aujourd'hui décroissantes des chrétiens du Moyen-Orient, est une religion de plus en plus post-Occident dominée par les peuples et les pays du grand Sud. Malgré ce que peuvent prétendre certains de leurs leaders, les évangéliques, les pentecôtistes et autres membres de la droite chrétienne américaine ne sont pas représentatifs des évangéliques et des pentecôtistes du reste du monde, ni du christianisme dans le Sud. Si les décideurs états-uniens jugent aujourd'hui qu'il est urgent d'axer leur politique étrangère sur le défi que pose

de créer des liens avec les groupes confessionnels tout en ayant conscience du fait que ceux-ci sont souvent formés de personnes et de sous-groupes ayant des opinions très divergentes.

Lacunes dans les données

Bien qu'on s'intéresse davantage depuis une décennie à la recherche sur les répétitions possibles de la diversité religieuse et sur les politiques à adopter à cet égard, les données de base sur l'identité religieuse et ses liens avec d'autres domaines relatifs aux politiques publiques demeurent une dentée rare.

Actuellement, la source la plus à jour d'information détaillée sur l'identité religieuse est la recherche sur l'opinion publique. Statistique Canada a également posé d'autres questions sur l'identité religieuse dans de plus récents sondages, comme l'Enquête sociale générale (ESG) menée en 1998, mais du point de vue d'un chercheur, les échantillons utilisés sont trop petits pour permettre des recherches fructueuses sur les minorités religieuses au Canada (et encore moins sur des sous-groupes ethniques ou linguistiques au sein de ces minorités). L'Enquête sur la diversité ethnique, menée par Statistique Canada à la suite du recensement, donne des chiffres plus exacts sur les minorités, mais elle est également considérée comme périmée puisqu'elle a été effectuée un an seulement après le 11 septembre 2001, et que les attitudes face à la religion peuvent avoir changé depuis.

Conclusion

La diversité religieuse est une réalité démographique au Canada. Bien qu'on ait souvent associé la diversité religieuse au domaine de la culture dans le passé, son traitement est devenu au cours des dernières années un sujet distinct : les gouvernements et les tribunaux doivent de plus en plus réagir à des conflits découlant de différends religieux et les arbitrer. Le présent article propose un cadre analytique permettant d'aborder la diversité religieuse du point de vue des personnes et des communautés ainsi que de la société dans son ensemble. Il souligne également la nécessité de mieux comprendre les facteurs liés à l'intégration des groupes religieux à la société canadienne.

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la société et d'éviter d'entretenir un écart plus ou moins grand de relations avec elle.

Instruments de politique et gouvernement

On demande de plus en plus aux gouvernements (et ceux-ci se posent la même question) s'il faut tenter de relever les défis découlant d'une société plus diversifiée sur le plan religieux, et de quelle façon on peut le faire. Il existe des lacunes quant à la façon de diagnostiquer précisément ce que sont ces défis (comme nous l'avons mentionné ci-dessus), mais également quant à l'efficacité des instruments de politique qui pourraient servir à les relever.

Par exemple, dans la mesure où les efforts accrus en matière d'information publique (visant, par exemple, à promouvoir l'acceptation de la diversité des pratiques religieuses et de la présence de symboles religieux dans l'espace public) sont considérés comme un aspect potentiellement important de l'adoption de politiques dans ce domaine à l'avenir, il est difficile de déterminer à quel point l'ensemble des Canadiens sont réceptifs à ces efforts, quelles différences systémiques pourraient exister à cet égard dans diverses régions ou divers groupes socioéconomiques et groupes d'âge, et enfin dans quelle mesure ces différences pourraient être conséquentes.

Il pourrait également être avantageux d'examiner plus à fond la question suivante de l'adoption de politiques qui peuvent et doivent être apportées aux politiques et aux programmes publics, notamment en identifiant et en étudiant les pratiques exemplaires utilisées dans ce domaine au Canada et dans d'autres pays.

D'autres questions se posent relativement à la gouvernance; on se demande par exemple quelle est la meilleure façon

L'appartenance religieuse en tant que capital social

Il est assez courant pour les immigrants (y compris les membres de minorités religieuses) de se rassembler dans des secteurs de concentration régionale – au moins pour un certain temps – afin de profiter des réseaux sociaux déjà établis (le capital social « intra-groupe ») qui peuvent servir de fondement pour joindre les réseaux sociaux de la société en général (le capital social « inter-groupe »).

Bien que ce type d'autoségrégation puisse parfois soulever des préoccupations, on ne sait pas exactement à quel moment et de quelle façon on doit distinguer le phénomène positif que nous venons de décrire des situations où des obstacles systémiques et autres pourraient empêcher les minorités religieuses de participer pleinement aux grands courants de la société canadienne. Par exemple, certaines études (entre autres Beyer, 2005) ont émis l'hypothèse que des personnes ayant certaines convictions religieuses seraient plus à risque d'avoir un faible revenu malgré leur niveau d'études élevé. Cela dit, il est difficile de déterminer dans quelle mesure ce phénomène est lié à l'appartenance religieuse ou à d'autres facteurs (par exemple, le statut d'immigrant, le temps passé au Canada, les connaissances linguistiques, etc.).

Dans un esprit un peu différent, on ne sait pas toujours ce qui constitue un indicateur d'un conflit éventuel avec les valeurs de la société dans son ensemble dans les cas où certains groupes religieux choisissent de s'exclure du reste de

de plus en plus laïque, le rôle du capital social au sein des groupes confessionnels et les défis spécifiques à l'intégration des musulmans dans la société canadienne. Il existe néanmoins des lacunes importantes dans les connaissances et la compréhension de questions clés (et même dans les données de base)

à cet égard.

Nature et fluidité de l'identité religieuse

Les croyances religieuses (ou l'absence de telles croyances) constituent souvent un aspect fondamental de l'identité de bien des personnes.

Comme le démontre Bowby (2001), l'identité religieuse est souvent étroitement liée à d'autres marqueurs de l'identité, comme le sexe, la race ou la langue, ainsi qu'à d'autres attributs de la personne qui peuvent avoir sur sa situation sociale et économique des répercussions jusqu'ici mal comprises.

De plus, contrairement au sexe et à la race, l'identité religieuse fait preuve d'une certaine fluidité : la nature et l'insistance des croyances religieuses et des liens avec d'autres personnes peuvent changer, et ont tendance à le faire, au cours d'une vie et d'une génération à l'autre. On ne sait pas exactement dans quelle mesure c'est le cas pour les immigrants provenant de pays où les traditions religieuses sont très différentes et pour qui l'immersion dans les traditions de la société canadienne pourrait poser des défis particuliers. On ne comprend pas non plus très bien de quelle façon l'identité religieuse évolue de la première génération d'immigrants à la deuxième et aux suivantes.

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fondamentales de la société en général, nécessitant un juste compromis. Ainsi, aucun discours social sur l'acceptation de la diversité religieuse ne peut être considéré à juste titre comme absolu. C'est particulièrement le cas puisqu'un tel discours évolue constamment à la lumière de l'évolution des mœurs et en fonction des situations où la société réussit à s'adapter à cette diversité changeante et de celles où elle échoue.

Lacunes en matière de recherche sur les politiques

Aucun discours social sur l'acceptation de la diversité religieuse ne peut être considéré à juste titre comme absolu. C'est particulièrement le cas puisqu'un tel discours évolue constamment à la lumière de l'évolution des mœurs et de la fonction des mœurs et de la diversité religieuse. Or, à bien des égards, il s'agit d'un domaine inconnu pour de nombreux décideurs (si ce n'est pour la plupart d'entre eux). En effet, les décideurs fédéraux comprennent à peine à examiner ces défis : l'article publié par des chercheurs du Programme de multiculturelisme (qui relevait alors du ministère du Patrimoine canadien mais qui a été transféré depuis au ministère de la Citoyenneté et de l'Immigration) dans le précédent numéro résume les recherches récentes commandées par la direction responsable du Programme, notamment sur la radicalisation de certains membres d'une communauté religieuse, l'interaction des Canadiens pratiquants avec une société

La coexistence – même au sein des textes fondamentaux du pays – d'héritages religieux de son passé historique et de son engagement à protéger la liberté de religion souligne le caractère distinct du Canada, tout comme le fait (souligné dans l'article de Thérien) que le Canada n'a jamais eu de religion d'État et ne s'est jamais prononcé officiellement en faveur du laïcisme de l'État.

En théorie, et de plus en plus dans la pratique quotidienne, le Canada apparaît comme une société plutôt neutre sur le plan de la religion, qui respecte en général la diversité religieuse mais qui tente de demeurer neutre vis-à-vis des diverses croyances (ou de l'absence de croyances) de ses citoyens. Cette vision est décrite (dans l'article de Thérien, qui aborde le contexte particulier du Québec) comme la « laïcité » pour la distinguer clairement de la doctrine plus percutante du « laïcisme », adoptée en France et dans certains autres pays. Un autre exemple de société neutre à l'égard de la religion pourrait être l'Inde, comme le décrit Bhargava dans ce numéro.

Cependant, même une société essentiellement neutre peut avoir à décider de mettre en place et de faire respecter certaines limites raisonnables concernant les pratiques religieuses (ou plus souvent les coutumes traditionnelles, qui peuvent être difficiles à distinguer des croyances religieuses), notamment lorsque ces pratiques peuvent être contraires à certaines valeurs

Dans son article publié dans le présent numéro, Cladis fait observer que les discours fondés sur la religion tenus dans l'espace public peuvent être et sont reconnus différemment d'une société à une autre – et même dans celles qui se considèrent comme des démocraties profondément libérales. L'article de Cladis porte avant tout sur la façon de composer avec la diversité religieuse dans l'espace public et dans les débats politiques, et de respecter cette diversité, sans toutefois la privilégier.

En s'inspirant des quatre modèles archétypiques de Cladis sur le rôle du discours religieux dans l'espace public, on peut regrouper les sociétés en diverses catégories historiques, depuis les sociétés fondées sur une seule religion dominante jusqu'à celles qui sont guidées par des principes religieux (c'est-à-dire où le discours religieux est un thème courant et récurrent dans les débats publics), bien qu'elles puissent être diversifiées sur le plan religieux, en passant par celles qui sont activement opposées à la religion ou celles qui sont neutres à cet égard.

Il est peu probable qu'une société contemporaine corresponde entièrement à l'un ou l'autre de ces archétypes. Cependant, le Canada, tout au long de son histoire, semble particulièrement difficile à classer dans ces catégories. Le préambule de la *Loi constitutionnelle de 1982*, reconnaît que « le Canada est fondé sur des principes qui reconnaissent la suprématie de Dieu et la primauté du droit ». La *Loi constitutionnelle de 1867* enchâsse également certains droits relatifs aux écoles confessionnelles. Dans les versions en français et en anglais de l'hymne national, on mentionne Dieu ou on y fait allusion. Parallèlement, la liberté de conscience et de religion est l'un des droits fondamentaux garantis par le paragraphe 2(a) de la *Charte canadienne des droits et libertés*.

Plusieurs articles de ce numéro décrivent des initiatives récentes et présentent des études sur des efforts fructueux – mais continus – visant à adapter les politiques gouvernementales à une diversité religieuse accrue. L'article de Millot et Tremblay décrit des adaptations dans le réseau scolaire québécois et celui de Benham Renick des adaptations à la diversité religieuse accrue au sein des forces armées canadiennes. Fondé sur des entrevues menées dans plusieurs ministères fédéraux, l'article de Gaye et Kunz décrit également des situations où les politiques fédérales ont été adaptées pour tenir compte de la diversité religieuse accrue. Dans une autre veine, le second article de Thomas publié dans ce numéro trace les grandes lignes de quelques-uns des principaux défis qui sont associés à la diversité religieuse accrue à l'échelle mondiale en ce qui concerne la politique étrangère du Canada et d'autres pays (voir l'article de Thomas à la page 50).

S'il existe de

nombreux exemples

de politiques dont

'adaptation a été

réussie, plusieurs

semblent plutôt le

résultat d'une

approche floue

consistant plus ou

moins à traiter de

chaque cas à mesure

qu'il se présente.

interrogés sont d'avis que le cadre constitutionnel et législatif large de notre pays (y compris les politiques de multiculturalisme d'application générale déjà en place) donne le ton à des adaptations souples qui pourraient plus difficilement être apportées s'il fallait composer avec des directives rigides de haut niveau.

Il n'est peut-être pas possible d'élaborer

une approche générale fondée sur des principes pour adapter les politiques à la diversité religieuse, mais les décideurs peuvent quand même tirer des leçons utiles des tentatives que laissent entrevoir les tentatives récentes (réussies ou non) d'adapter les politiques dans l'intérêt des groupes confessionnels. Par exemple :

- En général, l'adaptation des politiques dans des domaines où l'État n'est pas amené à exercer son autorité sur les Canadiens semble soulever très peu d'objections. On pense ici aux consultations menées auprès des intervenants au sein des

groupes confessionnels, à la plupart des services offerts à tous les Canadiens de manière plus ou moins équivalente (ou du moins d'une manière qui semble suffisamment souple pour tous) et même aux politiques étrangères.

- Les adaptations qui semblent impliquer des « exemptions » aux obligations législatives, réglementaires ou autres auxquelles sont soumis les Canadiens risquent généralement de soulever beaucoup plus de contro-

verse, surtout si elles semblent modifier des obligations imposées par la loi. Un exemple récent concerne le débat sur les propositions qui ont été faites en Ontario d'autoriser le recours à la charia et à d'autres codes juridiques pour l'arbitrage en droit familial.

- Les adaptations qui semblent aller à l'encontre des valeurs de base d'un grand nombre de personnes ou qui paraissent miner des symboles historiques importants portent tout particulièrement à controverse (bien qu'elles soient parfois difficiles à identifier à l'avance). La récente décision de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec de ne pas retirer le crucifix de la chambre, et donc de rejeter une des recommandations de la Commission Bouchard-Taylor, en est un exemple récent, tout comme la résistance en Ontario aux propositions visant à faciliter l'accès à des fonds publics aux écoles confessionnelles, malgré l'existence de certains droits à l'éducation confessionnelle enchaînés dans la Constitution.

Donner le ton : Le niveau

« macro »

Il serait probablement difficile (voire impossible) d'élaborer un cadre analytique unique permettant, d'une part, d'évaluer la nécessité d'apporter des modifications aux politiques concernant les groupes confessionnels diversifiés du Canada, et d'autre part, de concevoir ces modifications. Cependant, le Canada voudra (et devra) probablement tenir un discours cohérent dans l'ensemble, fondé sur des principes, qui permettra de décrire et d'orienter son approche globale.

Cette perception erronée témoigne d'un défi plus large : l'inconfort évident qu'éprouvent de nombreux Canadiens à l'idée de décider d'accommoder ou non leurs compatriotes appartenant à des

Adams signale également qu'il subsiste des zones de préoccupation et de malentendus entre les Canadiens musulmans et les Canadiens non musulmans. On craint entre autres que les Canadiens musulmans (qui sont pour la plupart des immigrants) ne soient pas déterminés à s'intégrer à la société en général – malgré l'intérêt et la détermination manifestes des Canadiens musulmans à cet égard.

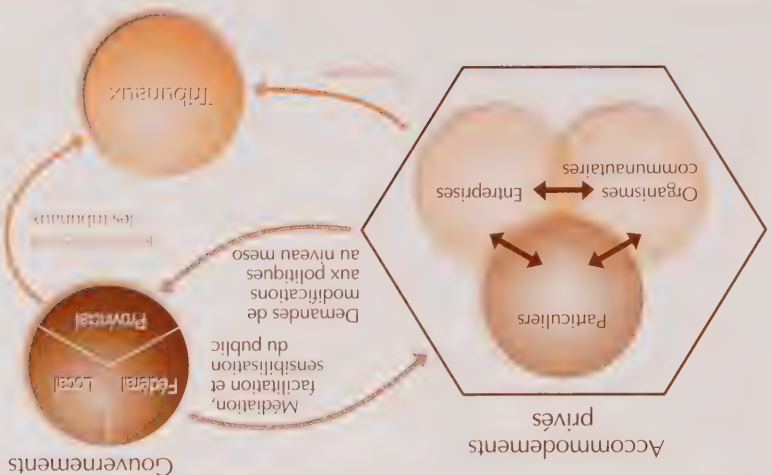
Little Mosque on the Prairie

Par exemple, un sondage mené par Environics auprès de Canadiens musulmans et non musulmans (résumé dans l'article d'Adams présenté dans ce numéro), révèle que la bonne volonté dont témoignent les deux groupes aide assurément les particuliers et les communautés à surmonter leurs différences grâce à des accommodements mutuels semblables à ceux qui sont mis en scène dans les épisodes de la série de fiction

comme une force pour la société.

Étant donné la place importante que la foi religieuse occupe dans l'identité des Canadiens, les accommodements privés relatifs aux différences religieuses apportent une contribution majeure à la cohésion sociale. Dans l'ensemble, les Canadiens semblent bien intentionnés à cet égard, et considèrent la diversité culturelle et, donc, la diversité religieuse, comme une force pour la société.

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Dynamique des accommodements au niveau micro

La plupart du temps, le processus décisionnel de même que les politiques et programmes qui en découlent ne semblent guère soulever de controverse.

Les rares situations où les efforts privés d'accommodement, habituellement fructueux, ne permettent pas d'éviter la controverse posent de plus grands défis aux décideurs. Les efforts publics de médiation et de facilitation donnent parfois des résultats, notamment quand les conflits restent discrets. Ils peuvent cependant échouer et donner lieu à des demandes relatives à différentes formes de règlement de différends.

Les rares situations où les efforts privés d'accommodement, habituellement fructueux, ne permettent pas d'éviter la controverse posent de plus grands défis aux décideurs.

groupe confessionnel à se tenir entre eux. Il pourrait donc être utile de préciser des efforts en vue de sensibiliser le public ou de favoriser le dialogue entre les différents groupes (comme il est suggéré dans l'article de Seljak publié dans ce numéro) afin de contribuer à réduire la portée des malentendus.

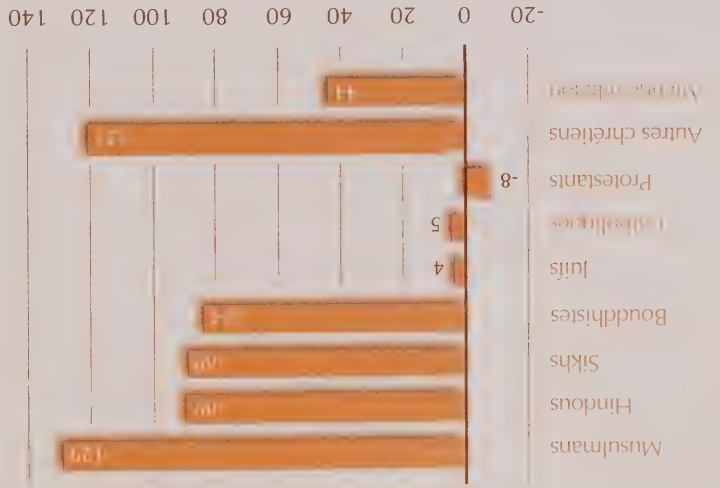
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(Voir la figure ci-dessous.)

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Quoi qu'il soit encore faible, le nombre de Canadiens venant d'un milieu religieux non chrétien a augmenté rapidement...

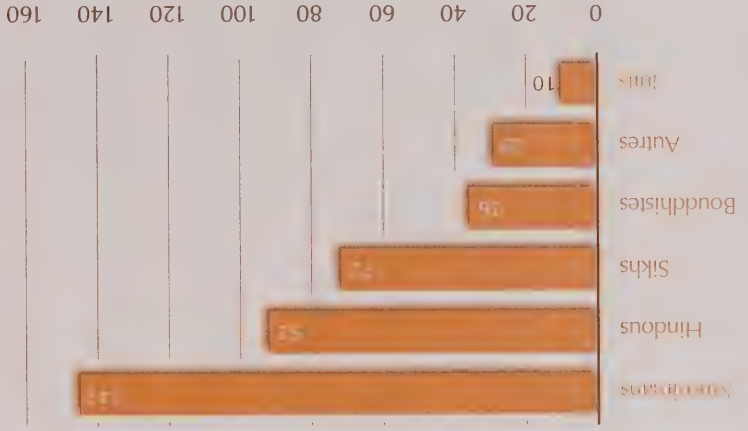
Pourcentage de changement dans l'appartenance religieuse, 1991-2001



Source : *Diversité Canadienne*, Volume 5 no 2, printemps 2006, « Now that religious diversity is upon us »; *Karnal Dīb*

... et il est prévu que ce nombre continue d'augmenter.

Pourcentage de changement projeté dans l'appartenance religieuse, 2001-2017



Source : *Diversité Canadienne*, Volume 5 no 2, printemps 2006, « Now that religious diversity is upon us »; Kamal Dib

Composer avec la
diversité religieuse :
Trois niveaux d'analyse
politique

Les politiques visant à faire face à une diversité religieuse accrue doivent idéalement pouvoir porter fruit simultanément à trois différents niveaux.

À ce qu'on pourrait considérer comme étant le niveau « micro », particuliers et organismes tentent généralement (avec succès la plupart du temps) de surmonter leurs différences grâce à diverses stratégies d'accommodement mutuel, en s'appuyant sur des interventions en matière de politiques publiques qui, dans une société cohésive, sont limitées ou occasionnelles.

Au niveau « meso » tous les ordres de gouvernements sont tenus d'élaborer des politiques, des programmes et des services publics qu'ils doivent offrir à tous les citoyens, pratiquement ou non pratiquants, généralement en les adaptant aux besoins de chacun, sous réserve que certaines valeurs de base, inscrites dans la constitution et dans d'autres documents fondamentaux, soient respectées.

Enfin, au niveau « macro » les sociétés diversifiées doivent en général se doter d'un dispositif démontrant de manière cohérente et convaincante qu'elles accordent un traitement équitable et respectueux à tous, en reconnaissant et en expliquant les compromis qui s'avèrent parfois nécessaires entre le respect de la diversité et les autres valeurs de base de la société dans son ensemble.

S'entendre : Le niveau « micro »

Au sein d'une société cohésive, les différences et les tensions qu'elle génère parfois sont, la plupart du temps, surmontées en privé, entre particuliers ou, à l'occasion, par l'intervention de leurs porte-parole communautaires auprès d'organismes privés. Pour surmonter les différences, les communautés

Faire face à la diversité religieuse : Un troisième volet de la politique de multiculturalisme

Au cours des vingt dernières années, la diversité culturelle, linguistique et religieuse s'est accrue au Canada. Pareille diversité exige une adaptation continue pour tenir compte d'un contexte social qui évolue à mesure que les gouvernements et les citoyens font face aux défis du jour. Depuis l'entrée en vigueur de la politique de multiculturalisme au Canada, il y a plus de trente ans, les sujets de discussion relatifs à la diversité culturelle sont passés de la protection de la culture dans les années 1970 à l'inclusion sociale dans les années 1990, en passant par l'égalité raciale dans les

La diversité religieuse dans un Canada multiculturel

Quo Vadis?

années 1980 (Fleras et Kunz, 2001). Si la religion est souvent abordée dans le contexte de la culture, l'accommodement de la diversité religieuse est depuis quelques années un sujet à part entière. Pendant le premier semestre de 2007, une série de tables rondes dirigées par le Projet de recherche sur les politiques (PRP), en partenariat avec le ministère du Patrimoine canadien, ont permis

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de recueillir les opinions de Canadiens choisis au hasard au sujet du multiculturalisme. L'une des principales constatations a été que beaucoup de participants ne savaient pas s'il fallait ou non intégrer la foi et la religion dans la sphère publique en général et dans le discours multiculturel en particulier, ni comment y arriver (Kunz et Sykes, 2007).

Dans une présentation récente, Kymlicka (2008) faisait observer que des pressions sont actuellement exercées dans le but de faire de la religion le « troisième volet » du multiculturalisme, avec l'ethnicité et la race. Il notait tout particulièrement qu'il subsiste pas mal d'incertitude concernant le rôle de la religion à l'intérieur de la politique de multiculturalisme, et concernant les types d'organisations religieuses et les revendications fondées sur la foi que les politiques devraient appuyer.

Citant tous les auteurs qui ont collaboré à ce numéro d'*Horizons* et d'autres sources, le présent article établit un cadre analytique préliminaire qui servira à explorer les incidences de la diversité religieuse au Canada sur les politiques. On part de l'hypothèse que la diversité religieuse est là pour rester et que les politiques établies pour traiter des questions que soulève cette diversité doivent porter fruit simultanément à différents niveaux :

- au niveau « micro », en facilitant et en favorisant les accommodements mutuels *privés* entre les personnes et les communautés en ce qui a trait à la religion;
- au niveau « meso », en adaptant les politiques et les programmes *gouvernementaux* pour répondre aux besoins d'une population diversifiée sur le plan religieux;

monde? Comment les sociétés et les institutions publiques gèrent-elles cette diversité? Comment les politiques gouvernementales et le discours dans l'environnement de la société doivent-ils s'adapter à une diversité culturelle grandissante? Quelques articles dans un seul numéro d'*Horizons* ne réussiront qu'à effleurer un sujet aussi vaste et complexe. Ils identifieront néanmoins des orientations possibles pour la recherche future. L'objectif consiste à stimuler l'intérêt des décideurs (et des chercheurs, tant au gouvernement que dans les milieux de recherche externes) dans la production et la dissémination d'études de grande qualité qui pourront influencer les politiques gouvernementales en matière de diversité religieuse, et leurs liens avec le cadre stratégique du pays sur le multiculturalisme.

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Pew Global Attitudes Project. 2008. <<http://pewglobal.org/reports/cache.php?ReportID=262>>

- l'absence d'un discours sociétal clair décrivant et guidant, à titre de *principe*, comment les Canadiens gèrent la diversité religieuse dans leur vie quotidienne;
- une compréhension insuffisante des rapports qu'entretiennent *dans la pratique* les gouvernements et les autres institutions avec les personnes et les communautés religieuses, particulièrement dans l'élaboration et la prescription des politiques et la prestation des services.

Dans l'ensemble, les institutions canadiennes ont plutôt bien géré les enjeux associés à la diversité. Néanmoins, il est possible que la tension monte entre les traditions religieuses des nouveaux arrivants et les traditions héritées d'Europe qui ont été intégrées à la vie civique. Ces débats pourraient également trouver écho dans le discours autour des Premières nations et des peuples fondateurs. Par contre, des études démontrent également que nous avons été capables de modifier les pratiques institutionnelles de manière à inclure la participation des personnes de religions différentes. Bien que ces changements se fassent parfois trop lentement, les mécanismes qui permettraient d'accélérer l'adaptation des institutions ne sont pas clairs. Notre principal atout réside probablement dans l'ouverture des gestionnaires au dialogue et dans leur volonté de déployer les efforts nécessaires afin de trouver d'autres façons d'opérer. En établissant des liens officiels avec les groupes confessionnels, les responsables des orientations politiques comprendront mieux le contexte dans lequel ils travaillent et obtiendront des conseils précieux sur les options envisagées.

Inspirés de la recherche au Canada et à l'étranger, les articles présentés dans ce numéro abordent les questions suivantes : Quelle est l'étendue de la diversité culturelle au Canada et dans le

Cet aspect des politiques gouvernementales est aussi intrinsèquement horizontal. Une meilleure compréhension des différences religieuses et du rôle des identités religieuses dans le tissu social du pays révélera vraisemblablement des besoins et des possibilités en matière de politiques qui inciteront un grand éventail de ministères et d'organismes à revoir les programmes et les politiques dont ils sont responsables et à déterminer quelles en seront les implications pour leurs méthodes de dotation en personnel et de gestion. En outre, l'élaboration, la conception et la mise en œuvre de certaines politiques intérieures et extérieures peuvent suggérer de nouvelles approches pour répondre à la diversité religieuse croissante dans les autres secteurs de politiques.

Les mécanismes d'apprentissage mutuel et d'élaboration horizontale des politiques sont encore faibles, en partie parce que les fonctionnaires considèrent ce sujet délicat, mais également parce qu'il y a peu de forums permettant de mettre les connaissances en commun et d'échanger des pratiques efficaces. Comment les structures en place nous permettent-elles de composer avec ces nouvelles pressions?

Les discussions sur la diversité religieuse ont souvent été englobées dans les thèmes plus larges de la diversité culturelle et du multiculturalisme. Pourtant, lors d'une série de tables rondes organisées conjointement, en 2007, par le Projet de recherche sur les politiques et le Programme du multiculturalisme (alors au ministère du Patrimoine canadien), bon nombre de participants ont remarqué que la religion s'impose de plus en plus comme un thème à part entière. Les lacunes suivantes ont notamment été identifiées :

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Gérer la diversité religieuse

Possibilités et défis

La popularité de la série télévisée canadienne *Little Mosque on the Prairie* démontre bien que la diversité religieuse est une réalité dans la vie quotidienne d'un grand nombre de Canadiens ordinaires. Une étude effectuée par le Pew Global Attitudes Project en 2008 démontre que la religion demeure toujours une composante essentielle dans la vie des gens pour la plupart des pays visés par l'enquête. Même si le Canada n'était pas inclus dans l'étude Pew, ces conclusions sont néanmoins en accord avec la situation qui prévaut ici.

En effet, bien que la participation aux services religieux soit en déclin, une majorité de Canadiens professent toujours leur appartenance à une confession religieuse. Cependant, les tendances de l'immigration sont en voie de modifier la façon dont les Canadiens expriment leur foi. Les faits présentés dans le présent numéro d'*Horizons* confirment l'ampleur croissante de la diversité religieuse au Canada. Plus particulièrement, alors

que les confessions traditionnelles catholique et protestante ont reculé durant la dernière décennie, le nombre d'adhérents à d'autres confessions religieuses a doublé pour cette même période. En outre, durant les dernières années, certains enjeux associés à la diversité religieuse ont surgi dans plusieurs domaines des politiques gouvernementales tant au Canada qu'à l'étranger.

Quelles en sont donc les implications? Dans le processus d'élaboration et dans l'application d'une politique, devrait-on revoir la façon dont on traite les défis liés à la religion?

Les questions posées par la diversité religieuse deviendront vraisemblablement de plus en plus saillantes avec le temps. Grâce à des changements récents dans le mode d'interaction des gouvernements avec les citoyens – par exemple le recours croissant aux services d'ombudsmen –, les particuliers ont de nouvelles façons de porter plainte lorsqu'ils considèrent que des politiques gouvernementales nuisent à la pratique de leur religion. Les employés fédéraux ont également un nouvel outil pour s'exprimer. En effet, des modifications récentes à la *Loi sur les relations de travail dans la fonction publique* ont mis en place un système informel de gestion des conflits afin de résoudre les tensions en milieu de travail, y compris celles liées à la religion. Les responsables des politiques seront appelés à déterminer comment adapter les politiques, s'il y a lieu de le faire, en fonction des besoins particuliers des Canadiens de différentes confessions religieuses.

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Conception et mise en page

Zsuzsanna Likó Visual
Communication Inc.

ISSN 1487-7090

Horizons est publié par le Projet de recherche sur les politiques (PRP) à l'intention des chercheurs en politiques du gouvernement fédéral. L'objectif premier du PRP est d'approfondir, de rassembler et d'intégrer les connaissances sur des questions de recherche intersectorielles pertinentes pour la planification des politiques à moyen terme du gouvernement du Canada. *Horizons* présente les travaux de chercheurs de ministères fédéraux et d'experts externes sur des sujets liés aux activités de recherche du PRP. Pour de plus amples informations sur le PRP ou pour consulter les anciens numéros d'*Horizons*, veuillez visiter <www.recherchepolitique.gc.ca>.

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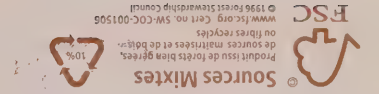
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Dix ans de savoir

10^e anniversaire

Peu après la mise sur pied du Projet de recherche sur les politiques (PRP), force a été de constater qu'il lui fallait un moyen de diffuser les résultats d'études liées aux politiques. C'est ainsi que la publication intitulée *Horizons* a vu le jour. À cette époque, il ne s'agissait que d'un bulletin contenant de courts articles visant à orienter les analyses vers des recherches portant sur des thèmes susceptibles d'intéresser la communauté tant des praticiens que des chercheurs en politiques. Au cours des dix dernières années, la revue *Horizons* est devenue l'une des publications-phares dans ce domaine au Canada.

Nos objectifs sont malgré tout demeurés les mêmes : publier des articles de grande qualité sur des questions qui présentent un intérêt grandissant sur le plan des politiques. Le choix des sujets est souvent — mais pas toujours — orienté par les recherches confiées au PRP. Tous les numéros d'*Horizons* sont conçus pour encadrer les enjeux stratégiques, pour aiguiller les décideurs vers des études de grande qualité, pour informer les chercheurs — tant au sein de l'appareil fédéral qu'à l'extérieur — de contribuer par l'entremise de leurs recherches à l'élaboration des politiques, et pour faire connaître les besoins de données et d'analyse, aussi bien théorique qu'empirique, qui devront être comblés pour assurer que le processus d'élaboration des politiques solidement soit fondé sur les preuves.

De nombreux numéros d'*Horizons* sont demeurés d'actualité au fil des ans et sont encore fréquemment consultés. Par exemple, celui sur la santé de la population (volume 2, numéro 3) a été téléchargé pas moins de 1 500 fois l'année dernière, soit neuf ans après sa parution.

Le présent numéro marque le 10^e anniversaire d'*Horizons*, dont les 42 numéros parus jusqu'à maintenant ont traité de toutes sortes de sujets d'intérêt pour le domaine des politiques publiques.



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HORIZONS

10^e anniversaire

MARS 2009 VOLUME 10 NUMÉRO 2

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CONVENTION DE LA POSTE-PUBLICATION
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